MORAL TALES,

BY

M. MARMONTEL.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

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ORIGINAL PREFACE.

HAVING been engaged ſome time ſince in writing upon comedy, I ſearched into nature for the rules and means of the art. This ſtudy led me to examine if it were true, as has been ſaid, that all the great ſtrokes of ridicule had been ſeized by Moliere, and the poets who have followed him.

In running over the canvas of ſociety, I thought I perceived, that in the inexhauſtible combinations of follies and extravagancies of all conditions, a man of genius might ſtill find ſufficient employment. I had even collected ſome obſervations

to propoſe to young poets, when my friend, M. de Boiſſi, deſired me to ſupply him with ſome pieces in proſe, to inſert in the Mercure. It came into my head to make uſe, in a tale, of one of the ſtrokes in my collection; and I choſe, by way of eſſay, the ridiculous pretenſion of being loved merely for one's-ſelf. This tale had all the ſucceſs that ſuch a trifle could have. My friend preſſed me to give him a ſecond. I propoſed to myſelf to diſplay the folly of thoſe who uſe authority to bring a woman to reaſon; and I choſe for an example a ſultan and his ſlave, as being the two extremes of power and dependence. This freſh eſſay alſo ſucceeded; and, pleaſed with having hit the taſte of the public, in a ſpecies of writing which they deigned to look upon

on as new, I continued to exerciſe myſelf in it.

I ſhall ſay little concerning the ſtyle: when it is I that ſpeak, I deliver myſelf up to the actual impreſſion of the ſentiment, or image which I mean to preſent; my ſubject furniſhes me with the manner. When I make my characters ſpeak, all the art I employ is to fancy myſelf preſent and to write down what I imagine I hear. In general, the moſt ſimple imitation of nature, in the manners and language, is what I have endeavoured in theſe tales: if they have not this merit, they have none.

I propoſed, ſomeyears ſince, under the article *Dialogue* in the Encyclopedia, to baniſh the *ſaid he*, and *ſaid ſhe*, from lively and animated dialogue.

I have

I have made the experiment in theſe Tales, and I think it has ſucceeded. This manner of rendering the narration more rapid, is uncouth only at firſt; as ſoon as we are accuſtomed to it, it makes the talent of reading well appear with greater luſtre.

The ſucceſs which the ſtory of *Soliman* has had upon the ſtage, as treated by a gentleman who writes with much eaſe and elegance, permits me to hope that the ſame uſe will be made of ſome of theſe little pictures of human life; and for the future I ſhall employ myſelf (as I have done in the three new tales, *The Good Husband*, *The Connoiſſeur* and *School of Fathers*) in chuſing ſtories eaſy to be brought upon the ſtage, in order to give authors leſs trouble.

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MORAL TALES.

ALCIBIADES: Or, THE SELF.

IT SEEMED that Nature and Fortune had conſpired towards the happineſs of Alcibiades. Riches, talents, beauty, birth, the flower of age and health; what a number of titles for the poſſeſſion of every foible! Alcibiades had but one: he wanted to be loved for *himſelf*. He had ſeduced every female in Athens, the *coquette* as well as the *prude*; but was he really loved for *himſelf alone?* This refined thought occurred to his mind one morning, as he had juſt paid his court to a prude; this is the moment for reflections. Alcibiades thought on what we call

the pure and refined *ſentiment*, the *metaphyſics* of love. "What a fool am I," ſaid he, "to "laviſh my time and trouble in paying my "addreſſes to a woman who perhaps does not "love me but for her *own ſake!* I am reſolv-"ed to know this truth. Yes! By all the "Gods I am; and if that be ſo, let her ſeek "one of our prize-fighters as a lover in my "place."

The beautiful prude, according to cuſtom, uſed always to oppoſe ſome weak reſiſtance to the deſires of Alcibiades. It was a dreadful thing! She could not think on it without bluſhing! None could come to ſuch reſolution without being as deeply enamoured as ſhe was. She would like above all things, that he was not ſo young, and that he was leſs preſſing. Alcibiades took her at her word: "Well, Ma-"dam," ſaid he one day, "I perceive that "theſe compliances are irkſome to you. I "will give you a proof of the moſt perfect "love. Yes, I conſent, ſince you chooſe it, "that our ſouls be united, and I give you my "word not to aſk any thing more."

The prude commended this reſolution with an air very capable to make it prove abortive, but Alcibiades ſtood firm. She was ſurpriſed and piqued at it, but ſhe was obliged to diſ-ſemble.

The next day ſhe diſplayed all the allure-

ments

ments of her diſhabille. The warmth of deſire ſhone in her eyes, careleſſneſs and voluptuouſneſs appeared in her carriage. The ſlighteſt garments, the moſt favourable diſorder, every thing on her invited Alcibiades to forget himſelf. He obſerved the ſnare. "What a victory," ſaid he to her, "what a victory to obtain over myſelf! I ſee well that love is trying me, and I think myſelf happy for it. Thereby the delicacy of my ſentiments will appear in a brighter light. Theſe tranſparent and ſlight coverings, theſe cuſhions which ſeem to be the throne of voluptuouſneſs, your beauty, my deſires, how many enemies to overcome! Ulyſſes could not eſcape from them, Hercules would yield to them. I am reſolved to be ſteadier than Ulyſſes, and leſs frail than Hercules. Yes I will convince you, that the only pleaſure of loving can ſtand in lieu of all pleaſures." "You are charming," ſaid ſhe to him, "and I can flatter myſelf to have a lover ſole in his kind; one thing only I dread, I fear your love will be weakened by rigour." "On the contrary," interrupted Alcibiades briſkly, "thereby it will become more keen and lively."—"But, dear child, you are young; and there are times wherein we are not maſters of ourſelves; and I believe your fidelity will run a great riſk if I leave you to

" your deſires."—" Be quiet, Madam, on " that head; I will anſwer for every thing. " If I can conquer my deſires with regard to " you, whom ſhall I not conquer in the like " way?"—" You promiſe to me at leaſt," ſaid ſhe to him, " that if your deſires become " too ſtrong, you will confeſs it to me. Let " not baſhfulneſs be an impediment to you. " Don't pique yourſelf of keeping your pro- " miſe to me; there is nothing I would not " rather forgive than infidelity."—" Yes, Ma- " dam, I will confeſs my weakneſs to you, " with the greateſt ſincerity in the world, " whenever I am ready to yield to it; but ſuf- " fer me, at leaſt, to try my own ſtrength; " I feel that it will go yet a great way; and " I hope that love will give me new force." The prude was now quite enraged; but, without giving herſelf the lie, ſhe could not complain. She ſtill checked herſelf, in hopes that on a new trial, Alcibiades would give way. He received the day after, as ſoon as he awoke, a billet conceived in theſe terms: " I have paſſed a moſt cruel night; come to " ſee me. I cannot live without you."

He arrives at the prude's houſe. The window-curtains were only half-open: a tender ray of light was ſtealing into the apartment through purple-undulations. The prude was lying in a bed, ſtrewed with roſes.

" Come,"

"Come," ſaid ſhe to him, with a plaintive voice, "come, and eaſe my inquietudes. "A frightful dream has diſturbed me all night. "I thought I ſaw you at the feet of a rival. "Oh! I ſhudder at it even yet! I have al- "ready told you, Alcibiades, that I cannot "live under the apprehenſions of your pro- "ving unfaithful: my misfortune would be "the more cutting to me, as I ſhould myſelf "be the cauſe; and I would at leaſt have no- "thing to reproach myſelf with. It is in vain "for you to promiſe me, that you will ſub- "due yourſelf; you are too young to be able "to do it long. Do I not know you? I "perceive that I have required too much of "you; I am ſenſible that it is both impru- "dent and cruel to impoſe ſuch hard terms "on you." As ſhe ſpoke theſe words, with the moſt touching air in the world, Alcibiades threw himſelf at her feet. "I am very "unhappy, Madam," ſaid he, "if you have "not a ſufficient eſteem for me, to belive me "capable of attaching myſelf to you by the "ties of ſentiment only! After all, of what "have I deprived myſelf? Of that which is "a diſhonour to love. I bluſh to ſee that you "ſet any value on ſuch a ſacrifice. But were "it as great as you imagine it, I ſhould but "have the more glory." "No, my dear Al- "cibiades," ſaid the prude, giving him at the

ſame time her hand, "I wiſh not for a ſacri-
"fice that coſts you ſo dear: I am too well
"aſſured, and too much pleaſed with the pure
"and delicate love you have ſo fully teſtified
"for me. Be happy; I give my conſent to
"it." "I am ſo, Madam," cried he, "in
"the pleaſure of living for you. Ceaſe to
"ſuſpect and complain of me; you ſee before
"you the moſt faithful, moſt tender, and moſt
"reſpectful of lovers. . . ." "And the fool-
"iſheſt," interrupted ſhe, drawing the cur-
tains roughly, and calling to her ſlaves. Al-
cibiades ſallied out in a rage, to find that he
had been loved only like another man, and
fully reſolved never more to ſee a woman who
had taken him merely for her own pleaſure.
"It is not thus," ſaid he, "that we love in
"the age of innocence; and if the young Gly-
"cerion ſhould experience for me what her
"eyes ſeem to declare to me, I am very cer-
"tain it muſt be love in its utmoſt purity."

Glycerion, in the fifteenth year of her age, attracted already the hearts of the moſt brilliant youths. Imagine to yourſelf a roſe when it begins to open; ſuch were the freſhneſs and ſplendour of her beauty.

Alcibiades preſented himſelf; his rivals diſappeared immediately. The cuſtom had not been introduced as yet into Athens, of marrying, in order to hate and deſpiſe one another

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the next day. Young people had time, before marriage, of ſeeing one another, and to ſpeak together with a decent liberty. The young women did not rely on their guardians for the care of their virtue. They gave themſelves the trouble of being wiſe themſelves. Modeſty did not begin to make a feeble reſiſtance, till after it was robbed of the honours of the victory. Glycerion's made the moſt handſome defence. Alcibiades omitted nothing to ſurpriſe or win her. He extolled the young Athenian lady for her talents, her graces, her beauty; he made her perceive, in every thing ſhe ſaid, a refinement ſhe never meant to give it, and a delicacy of which ſhe had not ſo much as thought. What a pity, that with ſo many charms ſhe was not endued with a ſenſible heart! "I adore you," ſaid he to her, "and I am happy if you love me. Do "not be afraid to tell me ſo: an ingenu- "ous candour is the virtue peculiar to your "age. It is in vain that they have given the "name of prudence to diſſimulation: that "beautiful mouth is not made to diſguiſe the "ſentiments of your heart: let it rather be "the organ of Love, ſince it was for himſelf "that he formed it." "If you would have "me be ſincere," replied Glycerium, with a modeſty mingled with tenderneſs, "contrive "at leaſt that I may be ſo without bluſhing.

"I would

"I would not diſguiſe the ſentiments of my "heart, neither would I violate my duty; "and I ſhould betray either the one or the "other, if I were to ſay more." Glycerion wiſhed that their marriage ſhould be agreed upon before ſhe explained herſelf. Alcibiades wanted her to explain herſelf before they ſhould "think of marriage. "It will be a fine time "indeed," ſaid he, "to aſſure me of your "love, when marriage ſhall have made it a "duty, and I ſhall have reduced you to the "neceſſity of feigning: it is now that you "are free, that it would pleaſe me to hear "from that mouth the diſintereſted confeſſion "of a natural and pure ſentiment."—"Well, "then! be content, and reproach me not "with wanting a ſenſible heart; it has at "leaſt been ſo ſince I have ſeen you. I eſteem "you ſufficiently to truſt you with the ſecret "of my heart; but now it has eſcaped me, "I aſk one favour of you: it is, not to re-"queſt any more private interviews, till you "have adjuſted the affair with thoſe on whom "I depend." The confeſſion which Alcibiades had juſt obtained would have completed the happineſs of any other leſs difficult lover; but his whim ſtill poſſeſſed him. He wanted ſtill to ſee whether he was loved for *himſelf*. "I will not conceal from you," ſaid he, "that the offer which I am going to make

may

" may be attended with bad ſucceſs. Your " relations receive me with a cold civility, " which I ſhould have taken for a diſmiſſion, " if the pleaſure I have in ſeeing you had not " overcome my delicacy; but if I oblige your " father to explain himſelf, there will no long- " er be any room for diſſembling. He is a " member of the Areopagus: Socrates, the " moſt virtuous of men, is there ſuſpected " and odious; I am the friend and diſciple of " Socrates, and I greatly fear that the hatred " they have for him may extend to me. My " apprehenſions perhaps carry me too far; " but at laſt, if your father ſacrifice us to his " politics, if he refuſes to give me your hand, " what do you determine to do?" " To be " unhappy," replied Glycerion, " and to " ſubmit to my deſtiny."—" You will ſee me " then no more?"—" If they forbid me to " ſee you, I muſt obey."—" You will obey " then alſo, if they propoſe another huſband " to you?"—" I ſhall become the victim of " my duty."—" And out of duty likewiſe " you will love the huſband they ſhall chuſe " for you?"—" I ſhall endeavour not to " hate him; but what queſtions you put to " me! What would you think of me your- " ſelf, if I entertained any other ſentiments?" —" That you loved me as you ought to love " me."—" It is too true that I do love you."

—" No,

—" No, Glycerion, Love knows no law; " he is above all obſtacles; but to do you " juſtice, this ſentiment is too great for your " age. It requires firm and courageous ſouls, " whom difficulties animate, and reverſes do " not ſhock. Such a paſſion, I confeſs, is rare. " To wiſh for an eſtate, a name, and a for- " tune at one's diſpoſal; to throw one's ſelf, " in ſhort, into the arms of a huſband, to " protect one againſt one's parents; this is " what is now called love, but what I call a " deſire of independence." " You act quite " tyrannically," ſaid Glycerion, with tears in her eyes, " to add injury to reproaches. I " have ſaid nothing to you, but what was ten- " der and honeſt. Did I balance one moment " to ſacrifice my lovers to you? Did I heſi- " tate to confeſs to you your triumph? What " is it you aſk further of me?" " I aſk of " you," ſaid he, " to ſwear a conſtancy to " me proof againſt every thing; to ſwear to " me, that you will be mine, whatever hap- " pens; and that you will be only mine."— " Indeed, Sir," ſaid ſhe, " that is what I " will never do."——" Indeed, Madam, I " ought to have expected this anſwer, and I " bluſh that I have expoſed myſelf to it." At theſe words he retired, tranſported with an- ger, and ſaying to himſelf, " I was well ſet " to work to fall in love with a child, who

" has

" has no ſoul, and whoſe heart diſpoſes of it-
" ſelf only by the advice of her parents."

There was in Athens a young widow, who appeared inconſolable for the death of her huſband. Alcibiades paid to her, as every body, his firſt reſpects with the gravity which decency requires, on a viſit to perſons in affliction. The widow found great comfort in the converſation of this diſciple of Socrates, and Alcibiades an inexpreſſible charm in the tears of the widow. Their moral diſcourſes, however, grew more lively from day to day. They joined in eulogies on the good qualities of the deceaſed, and agreed as to his bad ones. He was the honeſteſt man in the world! but his underſtanding, ſtrictly ſpeaking, was but ordinary. He had a pretty good figure, but without elegance, and without grace, full of attention and care, but his aſſiduity was tireſome. In ſhort, ſhe was in deſpair for having loſt ſo good a huſband, but fully reſolved not to take a ſecond. " What," ſaid Alcibiades, " at your age renounce matrimony!" " I con-
" feſs to you," ſaid the widow, " that as a-
" verſe as I am to ſlavery, yet liberty frightens
" me as much. At my age, delivered up to
" my own guidance, and having no depend-
" ence, what will become of me!" Alcibiades failed not to inſinuate to her, that between the bondage of matrimony and the abandoned ſtate

of

of widowhood, there was a middle path to take; and that with reſpect to decorums, nothing in the world was eaſier to be reconciled to them, than a tender attachment. She was ſtartled at the propoſition! ſhe had much rather die! Die at the age of loves and graces! it was eaſy to ſhow the ridiculouſneſs of ſuch a project, and the widow dreaded nothing ſo much as ridicule. It was reſolved, therefore, that ſhe ſhould not die; it was already decided, that ſhe could not even live without being protected by ſomebody; this ſomebody could be only a lover, and, without prejudice, ſhe knew no man more worthy than Alcibiades to pleaſe her, and to attach her. He redoubled his aſſiduities: at firſt ſhe complained of them; in a ſhort time ſhe accuſtomed herſelf to them; at length ſhe aſked the meaning of them; and to avoid all imprudence, they ſettled matters decently.

Alcibiades was at the height of his deſires. It was neither the pleaſure of love nor the advantage of marriage which were admired in him, it was *himſelf alone*, at leaſt he believed ſo. He triumphed over the grief, over the prudence, over the pride of a woman, who required nothing of him in return, but ſecrecy and love. The widow, on her ſide, plumed herſelf on holding under her dominion

minion the object of the jealousy of all the beauties of Greece. But how few persons know how to enjoy without a confidante! Alcibiades, while a secret lover, was only a common lover like another man, and the greatest triumph is no further pleasing, than in proportion as it is publick. An author has said, that it is not enough to be in a fine country, if we have no one whom we can say to, "What a fine country!" The widow found in like manner, that it was not sufficient to have Alcibiades for a lover, if she could not tell any one, "I have Alcibia-"des for a lover." She communicated it therefore, in confidence, to an intimate friend, who communicated it again to her lover, and he to all Greece. Alcibiades, astonished that his adventure was become publick, thought it his duty to acquaint the widow of it, who accused him of indiscretion. "If "I were capable of any such thing," said he, "I should suffer those reports to prevail, "which I had been desirous of propagating; "but I wish for nothing so much as to stifle "them. Let us keep a guard over ourselves; "let us avoid all meeting together in publick; "and whenever accident may happen to bring "us together, be not offended at the strange "and careless air I shall affect towards you." The widow received all this but very indiffer-

ently. "I perceive indeed," ſaid ſhe, "that "you will be the more at eaſe for it: aſſiduities "and attention confine you too much, and "you aſk nothing better than the power of "wandering. But for me, what ſort of a "countenance would you have me put on? I "know not how to take upon me to be a co-"quette: weary of every thing in your ab-"ſence, penſive and embarraſſed before you, "I ſhall have the appearance of being trifled "with, and in fact, perhaps ſhall be ſo. If "they are perſuaded that you poſſeſs me, there "is no longer any remedy: the world is not "to be turned again. Where will be the "good then of this pretended myſtery? We "ſhall have the appearance, you of a diſ-"engaged lover, I of a forſaken miſtreſs." This anſwer from the widow ſurpriſed Alcibiades; the conduct ſhe obſerved completed his aſtoniſhment. Day after day ſhe gave herſelf greater freedoms and liberty: at any publick ſhow ſhe expected that he ſhould be ſeated behind her, that he ſhould hand her to the temple, and be of the party in her walks and her ſuppers. She affected above all things to have him among her rivals; and in the midſt of them it was her pleaſure that he ſhould ſee nobody but her: ſhe commanded him in an abſolute tone of voice, viewed him with an eye of myſtery, ſmiled at him with an air

that

that carried meaning in it, and whiſpered him in the ear with that familiarity which betrays to the world the connexion there is between two perſons. He ſaw plainly, that ſhe led him every where like a ſlave chained to her car. "I have taken airs for ſentiments," ſaid he, with a ſigh: "it is not me that ſhe loves; it "is the glory of having conquered me; ſhe "would deſpiſe me if ſhe had no rivals. Let "me teach her, that vanity is unworthy to "fix love."

The envy of the philoſophers could not forgive Socrates, that he taught nothing in publick but truth and virtue: they preferred every day to the Areopagus the heavieſt complaints againſt this dangerous citizen. Socrates, employed in doing good, let them ſay all the harm of him they thought proper; but Alcibiades, devoted to Socrates, oppoſed his enemies. He preſented himſelf before the magiſtrates; he reproached them with liſtening to baſe perſons, and countenancing impoſtors; and ſpoke of his maſter as the juſteſt and wiſeſt of mortals. Enthuſiaſm creates eloquence: in the conferences which he had with one of the members of the Areopagus, in preſence of the wife of the judge, he ſpoke with ſo much ſweetneſs and vehemence, with ſo much ſenſe and reaſon, his beauty glowed with a fire ſo noble and affecting, that this

virtuous woman was affected by it to the bottom of her ſoul. She took her perturbation for admiration. "Socrates," ſaid ſhe to her ſpouſe, "is really a divine man, "if he makes ſuch diſciples. I am charmed "with the eloquence of this young man; it "is impoſſible to hear him without becoming "better." The magiſtrate, who was far from doubting the prudence of his wife, informed Alcibiades of the praiſes ſhe beſtowed on him. Alcibiades was pleaſed with them: he aſked the huſband's permiſſion to cultivate the eſteem of his wife. The good man invited him to his houſe. "My wife," ſaid he, "is a philoſopher too, and I ſhall be "very glad to ſee you diſputing together." Rhodope (for that was the name of this reſpectable matron) prided herſelf indeed on her philoſophy, and that of Socrates from the mouth of Alcibiades pleaſed her ſtill more and more. I forgot to mention, that ſhe was of that age in which women are paſt being *pretty*, but in which they may ſtill be reckoned *handſome*; in which perhaps they are a little leſs lovely, but in which they know better how to love. Alcibiades paid his devoirs to her. She diſtruſted neither him nor herſelf. The ſtudy of wiſdom filled up all their converſations. The leſſons of Socrates paſſed from the ſoul of Alcibiades into that of Rhodope, and in

their paſſage gathered new charms: it was a rivulet of pure water running over flowers. Rhodope became every day more changed by it: ſhe accuſtomed herſelf to define, according to the principles of Socrates, wiſdom and virtue, truth and juſtice. Friendſhip came in its turn; and, after examining its eſſence, "I ſhould be glad," ſaid Rhodope, "to "know what difference Socrates makes be-"tween love and friendſhip?" "Though So-"crates is not one of thoſe philoſophers," replied Alcibiades, "who analyſe every thing, "yet he diſtinguiſhes three ſorts of love: the one groſs and baſe, which is common to "us with other animals; that is to ſay, the "impulſe of neceſſity, and the reliſh of plea-"ſure: the other, pure and celeſtial, and "by which we approach the gods; this is "the moſt ardent and tender friendſhip: laſt-"ly, the third, which participates of the "two firſt, preſerves the medium between "the gods and the brutes, and ſeems the "moſt natural to man; this is the union of "ſouls cemented by that of the ſenſes.

"Socrates gives the preference to the mere "charm of friendſhip: but as he does not blame "*nature* for having united *ſpirit* to *matter*, he does not blame *man* becauſe he favours of this *mixture* in his inclinations and plea-"ſures. Above all, when nature has taken

" pains to unite a fine perſon with a fine " ſoul, he would have us reſpect the work " of Nature; for how ill-favoured ſoever " Socrates may be, he does juſtice to beauty. " If he knew, for example, whom I hold " theſe diſcourſes with concerning philoſophy, " I make no doubt but he would reproach " me for having ſo ill employed my leſſons." " I diſpenſe with your being gallant," interrupted Rhodope: " I am talking to a ſage; " and young as he is, my wiſh is, that he " would enlighten me, and not flatter me. " Let us return to the principles of your " maſter. He permits love, you ſay; but " does he know its errors and exceſſes?" " Yes, Madam, as he knows thoſe of drunk- " enneſs, and nevertheleſs allows the uſe " of wine." The compariſon is not juſt," ſaid Rhodope; " we may chuſe our wines, " and moderate the uſe of them: have we " the ſame liberty in love? It is without " choice or meaſure." Yes, without doubt," rejoined Alcibiades, " in a man without mo- " rals or principles; but Socrates begins " by making men wiſe and virtuous, and " it is to them only that he permits love. " He well knows that they will love nothing " but what is honeſt, and there we run no " riſk of loving to exceſs. The mutual " inclination of two virtuous ſouls cannot

" but

"but render them ſtill more virtuous." Every anſwer of Alcibiades removed ſome difficulty in the mind of Rhodope, and rendered her inclination for him more inſinuating and rapid. There remained now only conjugal fidelity, and there was the Gordian knot. Rhodope was not one of thoſe with whom one might cut it, there was a neceſſity of undoing it for her; Alcibiades ſounded her at a diſtance. As they were one day on the ſubject of ſociety, "Neceſſity," ſaid Alcibiades, "has united "mankind, common intereſt has regulated "their duties, and the abuſes of them have "produced laws. All this is ſacred; but all "this is foreign to our ſoul. As men are not "connected but externally, the mutual du-"ties which they impoſe upon each other paſs "not beyond the ſurface. Nature alone is the "legiſlatreſs of the heart: ſhe alone can in-"ſpire with gratitude, friendſhip, love. Sen-"timent cannot be a duty by inſtitution. "Thence comes it, for example, that in "marriage we can neither promiſe nor require "any more than corporal attachment." Rhodope, who had reliſhed the principle, was terrified at the conſequence. "What," ſaid ſhe, "could I have promiſed my huſband only *to* "*behave* as if I loved him?"—"What elſe "was it in your power to promiſe him?" "To "love him in reality," replied ſhe, in a very indeterminate

indeterminate tone of voice.—" He has pro-
" miſed you then in his turn to be not only
" amiable, but of all men the moſt amiable
" in your eyes?"—" He has promiſed me to
" do all in his power towards it, and he keeps
" his word with me."—" Very well, you alſo
" do all in your power to love him only; yet
" neither the one nor the other of you are ſure
" of ſucceſs." " This is frightful philoſo-
" phy," cried Rhodope.—" Happily, Ma-
" dam, it is not ſo frightful: there would be
" too many criminals, if conjugal love were
" an eſſential duty."—" What, Sir, do you
" doubt it?"—" I doubt nothing, Madam;
" but my frankneſs may diſpleaſe you, and I
" do not ſee you diſpoſed to imitate it. I
" thought I was ſpeaking to a philoſopher, but
" I find I was ſpeaking only to a woman of a
" lively genius. I retire, confounded at my
" miſtake; but I would give you at parting
" an inſtance of ſincerity. I believe I have
" morals as pure, as honeſt, as the moſt vir-
" tuous woman; I know too full as well as
" ſhe, to what the honour and religion of an
" oath engages us; I know the laws of mar-
" riage, and the crime of violating them:
" however, had I married a thouſand women,
" I ſhould not have reproached myſelf in the
" leaſt for thinking you alone handſomer, and
" more amiable a thouſand times, than theſe

thouſand

"thouſand women put together. According "to you, in order to be virtuous, we muſt "have neither heart nor eyes; I congratu- "late you on being arrived at ſuch a degree "of perfection."

This diſcourſe, pronounced with a tone of vexation and anger, left Rhodope in an aſtoniſhment from which ſhe had ſome difficulty to recover. From that time Alcibiades diſcontinued his viſits. She had diſcovered in his adieus a warmer intereſt than that occaſioned by the heat of the diſpute: ſhe perceived on her own ſide, that the loſs of his philoſophical conferences was not what ſhe regreted moſt. A diſlike of every thing, a diſguſt to herſelf, a ſecret repugnance to the officious ſervices of her huſband, laſtly, the confuſion and bluſhes which the name alone of Alcibiades created, all theſe things made her dread the danger of ſeeing him again; and yet ſhe burnt with the deſire of ſeeing him once more. Her huſband brought him back to her. As ſhe had given him to underſtand, that they had differed a little in a diſpute concerning words, the magiſtrate rallied Alcibiades on it, and obliged him to return. The interview was grave; the huſband amuſed himſelf with it ſome time; but his affairs ſoon called him away. "I leave you," ſaid he to them, "and I hope, that after having quarrelled

"about

" about words, you will come to a reconci-
" liation upon things." The good man meant no harm; but his wife could not help blushing for him.

After a silence pretty long, Alcibiades said: " Our conversation, Madam, was all " my delight, and with every degree of pro-" pensity to dissipation you had given me a " taste to prefer the charms of solitude to all " things. I was no longer one of the world, " I was no longer myself, I was wholly " and entirely yours. Think not that a " foolish hope of seducing and leading you " astray had stolen you into my soul: virtue, " much more than wit and beauty, had en-" slaved me to your laws. But loving you " with a passion as delicate as it was tender, " I flattered myself I should have inspired you " with the like. This pure and virtuous love " offends you, or rather is only troublesome to " you; for it is impossible that you should con-" demn it in reality. All that I feel for you, " Madam, you yourself feel for another; you " have confessed it to me. I cannot reproach " you on the account, nor complain of it; " but allow, that I am not happy. There is " perhaps but one woman in Athens who real-" ly has a love for her husband, and it is for " this very woman that I am distracted." " Indeed you are a great simpleton for the

" disciple

" diſciple of a ſage," ſaid Rhodope with a ſmile. He replied very gravely; ſhe anſwered again jeeringly; he took her by the hand, ſhe grew angry; he kiſſed her hand, ſhe would have withdrawn herſelf; he detained her, ſhe bluſhed; and the heads of both the philoſophers were turned.

It is unneceſſary to ſay how much Rhodope was grieved, and how ſhe conſoled herſelf. All this is eaſily ſuppoſed in a virtuous and captivated woman.

She trembled above all for the honour and peace of her huſband. Alcibiades took an oath to her of inviolable ſecrecy; but the malice of the publick rendered any indiſcretion on his part abſolutely needleſs. It was well known, that he was not the ſort of man to talk for ever about philoſophy to an amiable woman. His aſſiduities created ſuſpicions; ſuſpicions in the world always go as far as certainties. It was decided that Alcibiades *had* Rhodope. The report came to the ears of her huſband: he was far from giving credit to it; but his honour, and that of his wife, required that ſhe ſhould put herſelf above ſuſpicion. He ſpoke to her of the neceſſity of putting away Alcibiades with ſo much ſweetneſs, reaſon and confidence, that ſhe had not even the courage to reply. Nothing more grievous to a ſoul naturally ſenſible and virtuous

tuous, than the receiving marks of eſteem, which it no longer deſerves.

Rhodope from that moment reſolved never more to ſee Alcibiades; and the more weakneſs ſhe perceived in herſelf towards him, the more firmneſs ſhe diſplayed in her reſolution of breaking with him without return. In vain did he endeavour to ſubdue her by all his eloquence. "I have ſuffered myſelf to be perſuaded," ſaid ſhe to him, "that the ſecret "injuries we do a huſband were nothing; "but the very appearances of them become "real injuries from the moment they attack "his honour, or diſturb his peace. I may be "willing to believe that I am not obliged to "love my huſband; but to render him happy, "as far as in me lies, is an indiſpenſible du-"ty." "So then, Madam, you prefer his "happineſs to mine?"—"I prefer," ſaid ſhe to him, "my engagements to my inclinations: "this word, which has now eſcaped me, "ſhall be my laſt weakneſs." "Alas! I "thought myſelf beloved," cried Alcibiades with diſpleaſure. "Farewell, Madam; I ſee "plainly that I owed my happineſs only to "the caprice of a moment. Lo! theſe are "our honeſt women!" continued he. "When "they take to us, it is an exceſs of love; "when they forſake us, it is an effort of vir-"tue; and at the bottom this love and this

virtue

" virtue are nothing more than a mere phan-
" taſy, which ſeizes them at one time, and
" leaves them at another. " I have deſerved
" all theſe outrages," ſaid Rhodope, burſting into tears. " A woman who has not main-
" tained a proper reſpect for herſelf is not to
" expect it from others. It is very juſt that
" our weakneſſes ſhould bring upon us con-
" tempt."

Alcibiades was thoroughly convinced, after ſo many proofs, that there was no longer any dependence upon women; but he had not confidence enough in himſelf to expoſe himſelf to new dangers; and fully reſolved as he was, not to love again, he yet perceived in a confuſed manner the neceſſity of loving.

In this ſecret uneaſineſs, as he was walking one day at the ſea-ſhore, he ſaw a woman walking up to him. Her gait, her beauty, would have made him take her for a goddeſs, if he had not known her to be the courtezan Erigone. He would have ſhunned her, but ſhe made up directly to him. " Alcibiades," ſaid ſhe, philoſophy will make a fool of you. " Tell me, my dear boy, is it a time at your
" age to bury one's ſelf alive in theſe chime-
" rical and melancholy ideas? Take my ad-
" vice, and be happy; we have always time
" enough to be wiſe." " I have no ambition
" to be wiſe," ſaid he to her, " but in order

" to be happy."—" A pretty road indeed to " happineſs! Do you think I wear myſelf out " in the ſtudy of wiſdom? Not I. And yet " is there any of your honeſt women more " content with her condition? This Socrates " has ſpoiled you: it is a pity; but yet there " is a cure for you, if you will take ſome " leſſons from me. I have had a deſign upon " you for ſome time: I am young, handſome, " and ſenſible; and I believe I may ſay, with- " out vanity, of as much value as any long- " bearded philoſopher of them all. They " teach mortification; horrible ſcience! Come " to my ſchool, and I will teach you the art " of enjoyment." " I have learnt it but too " well, to my coſt," replied Alcibiades: " oſtentation and pleaſure have ruined me. I " am no longer that opulent and magnificent " perſon whom his follies rendered ſo famous, " and I have not at preſent even a ſupport but " at the expence of my creditors."—" Very " well, and is it that which chagrins you? " Be comforted: I have gold and jewels in " abundance, and the follies of others ſhall " ſerve to repair thine." " You flatter me " greatly," replied Alcibiades, " by theſe ob- " liging offers; but I ſhall not make an ill " uſe of them."—" What d'ye mean by this " delicacy of your's? Does not love make all " things common? Beſides, who will imagine

" that

" that you owe any thing to me? You are " not fool enough to boaſt of it, and I have " too much pride to publiſh it myſelf."—" I " confeſs you ſurpriſe me; for, in ſhort, you " have the character of being avaricious."— " Avaricious! Ay, to be ſure, with thoſe " whom I do not love, in order to be laviſh " to the man that I love. My diamonds are " very dear to me, but you are ſtill dearer: " if you want them, ſay but the word: to- " morrow I will ſacrifice them to you." Your " generoſity," replied Alcibiades, " confounds " and penetrates me: I would give you the " pleaſure of exerciſing it, if I were able at " leaſt to ſhow my gratitude like a young fel- " low; but I ought not to diſſemble with " you, that the immoderate uſe of pleaſures " has not only ruined my fortune, but I have " found out the ſecret of growing old before " my time." " I believe ſo," replied Erigone ſmiling, " you have known ſo many honeſt " women! But I am going to ſurpriſe you " ſtill more: a lively and delicate ſentiment " is all that I expect from you; and if your " heart too is not ruined, you have yet where- " withal to ſuffice me." " You railly!" ſaid Alcibiades.—" Not at all. If I took a Her- " cules for a lover, I ſhould wiſh him to prove " himſelf a Hercules; but I would have Al- " cibiades love me only like Alcibiades, with

" all the delicacy of that tranquil pleaſure " whoſe ſource is in the heart. If on the ſen- " ſual ſide you intend me any ſurpriſe, ſo " much the better! I allow you every thing, " and I exact nothing." " Indeed," ſaid Alcibiades, " I am as much charmed as aſto- " niſhed; and but for the uneaſineſs and jea- " louſy I ſhould feel on account of my rivals" —" Rivals! you ſhall have none but unfor- " tunate ones, I give you my word. Truſt " me, my friend, women do not change but " either through coquetry or curioſity; and " with me, you know, both the one and the " other are exhauſted. If I were unacquainted " with mankind, the promiſe I now make " you might be a little raſh; but in ſacrificing " them to you, I know very well what I am " doing. After all, there is one certain way " of making you eaſy: you have a farm at a " good diſtance from Athens, where no im- " pertinents will come to trouble us. Do " you think yourſelf capable of ſupporting a " *tête a tête* there with me? We will ſet out " whenever you will." " No," ſaid he to her, " my engagements detain me for ſome " time in town; but if we ſhould ſettle mat- " ters together, need we advertiſe ourſelves?" —" Juſt as you pleaſe: if you think proper " to own me, I ſhall proclaim thee: if you " chuſe ſecrecy, I will be more diſcreet and " reſerved

" reſerved than a prude. As I am dependent " on no body, and love you merely for your " own ſake, I neither fear, nor deſire to at- " tract, the eyes of the public. Put no con- " ſtraint on yourſelf; conſult your heart; and " if I am agreeable to you, my ſupper is rea- " dy for us. Let us go and call the gods of " joy and pleaſure to witneſs to our vows." Alcibiades ſeized Erigone by the hand, and kiſſed it with tranſport. " At laſt," ſaid he, " I have found a love; and it is from this " very day that my happineſs commences."

They arrive at the courteſan's. The moſt delicate and exquiſite of every thing that taſte could invent to gratify all the ſenſes at once, ſeemed to have concurred in this ſupper to enchant Alcibiades. It was in ſuch an apartment that Venus received Adonis, when the Loves poured out nectar, and the Graces ſerved them with ambroſia. " When I took," ſaid Erigone, " the name of one of the miſ- " treſſes of Bacchus, I did not flatter myſelf " with poſſeſſing one day a mortal handſomer " than the conqueror of India. What do I " ſay? a mortal! It is Bacchus, Apollo, and " the God of Love himſelf, that I poſſeſs; and " I am this moment the happy rival of Eri- " gone, of Calliope and Pſyché. I crown " you then, O my young God, with the vine- " leaf, the laurel, and the myrtle. May I be

" able to bring together to your eyes all the " attractions adored by thoſe immortals, whoſe " charms are united in you." Alcibiades, intoxicated with ſelf-love and love, diſplayed all thoſe enchanting talents which might have ſeduced wiſdom itſelf. He ſung his triumph on the lyre: he compared his happineſs to that of the gods; and he found himſelf happier than they, as he had before been found to be more amiable.

After ſupper he was conducted into a neighbouring apartment, but ſeparated from that of Erigone. " Repoſe yourſelf, my dear Alci- " biades," ſaid ſhe, leaving him: " may " love poſſeſs you in your dreams of nothing " but me! Vouchſafe at leaſt to make me be- " lieve ſo; and if any other object ſhould pre- " ſent itſelf to your imagination, ſpare my " delicacy, and by a complaiſant falſehood, " repair the involuntary wrong you ſhall have " done me in your ſleep." " Ah, what!" " replied Alcibiades tenderly, " will you re- " duce me to the pleaſures of illuſion?" " You ſhall never have with me," ſaid ſhe to him, " any other laws than your deſires." At theſe words ſhe withdrew into her own apartment, humming a tune.

Alcibiades cried out in a tranſport of joy, " O modeſty! O virtue! what then are ye, " if in a heart, where you reſide not, there is " found

" found pure and chaſte love; love, ſuch as " it deſcended from the ſkies to animate man " while yet innocent, and to embelliſh human " nature?" In this exceſs of joy and admiration he gets up, and goes to ſurpriſe Erigone.

Erigone received him with a ſmile. Inſpired with a ſenſibility tempered with delicacy, her heart ſeemed only to take fire from the deſires of Alcibiades. Two months glided away in this delicious union, without the courteſan's belying ever for one moment the character ſhe had aſſumed; but the fatal day now approached that was to diſſipate ſo flattering an illuſion.

The preparations for the Olympic games engroſſed the converſation of all the youth of Athens. Erigone ſpoke of theſe games, and of the glory of bearing away the prize in them, with ſo much warmth, that ſhe made her lover form the deſign of entering into the courſe, and conceive a hope of triumphing. But he wanted to delight her by an agreeable ſurpriſe.

The day on which theſe games were to be celebrated, Alcibiades left her, in order to repair thither. " If they ſhould ſee us toge- " ther," ſaid he, " at theſe ſpectacles, they " would not fail of drawing inferences from " thence; and we have agreed to avoid even " ſuſpicion. Let us repair to the circus each

" on

" on different ſides. We will return here af-
" ter the feaſt, and I expect you at ſupper
" with me."

The people meet and take their ſeats: Erigone appears and attracts the eyes of all the ſpectators. The pretty women ſee her with envy; the ugly with ſpite; the old men with regret; the young with an unanimous tranſport. However, the eyes of Erigone, wandering over the vaſt amphitheatre, looked for nothing but Alcibiades. All on a ſudden ſhe ſaw appear before the barrier the courſers and the chariot of her lover. She durſt not believe her eyes; but ſoon after a young man, more beautiful than the God of Love, and more gallant than Mars, vaults into the glittering car. It is Alcibiades; it is he himſelf! The name paſſes from mouth to mouth; ſhe hears no longer any thing around her but theſe words: " It is Alcibiades, the glory and
" ornament of the Athenian youth." Erigone turned pale with joy: he caſt a look at her, which ſeemed to be the preſage of victory. The chariots range themſelves in a line, the barrier opens, the ſignal is given, the ground reſounds in cadence under the feet of the horſes, a cloud of duſt enfolds them. Erigone no longer breathes: all her ſoul is in her eyes, and her eyes purſue the chariot of the lover acroſs the waves of duſt. The chariots ſepa-

rate,

rate, the ſwifteſt get before, that of Alcibiades is of the number. Erigone, trembling, puts up vows to Caſtor, to Pollux, to Hercules, to Apollo. At laſt ſhe perceives Alcibiades at the head, and having only one who kept pace with him. It was then that fear and hope held her ſoul ſuſpended. The wheels of the two chariots ſeemed to turn on the ſame axle, and the horſes guided by the ſame reins. Alcibiades redoubles his ardour, and the heart of Erigone begins to dilate: his rival increaſes his ſpeed, and the heart of Erigone ſhuts itſelf up again: every alternate revolution produces a ſudden change in her. The two chariots arrive at the goal; but Alcibiades was outſtripped a ſingle ſhoot forwards by his antagoniſt. Immediately a thouſand cries made the air reſound with the name of Piſicrates of Samos. Alcibiades in conſternation retires in his chariot; his head hung down, and the reins floating looſely, avoiding that ſide of the circus where Erigone, overwhelmed with confuſion, had hid her face beneath her veil. It appeared to her as if all eyes fixed upon her to reproach her for loving a man who had juſt been conquered. A general murmur, however, is heard round her; ſhe looks up to ſee what occaſions it; it is Piſicrates, who is bringing back his chariot on the ſide where ſhe is placed. A new ſubject of confuſion and

grief

grief! But what is her ſurpriſe, when the chariot ſtopping at her feet, ſhe ſees the conqueror alight, and preſent her with the Olympic crown! "I owe it to you, Madam," ſaid he, "and I come to pay you the homage of it." Let us conceive, if poſſible, all the emotions by which the ſoul of Erigone was agitated at this ſpeech; but love was maſter ſtill. "You "owe me nothing," ſaid ſhe to Piſicrates, bluſhing; "my wiſhes, pardon my frank-"neſs, my wiſhes were not for you." "The "deſire of conquering before you," replied he, "has not the leſs on that account acquired me "this glory. If I have not been happy enough "to intereſt you in the contention, let me be "at leaſt ſufficiently ſo to intereſt you in the "triumph." He then preſſed her anew, with the moſt affecting air, to receive his offering: All the people invited her to it by redoubled ſhouts of applauſe. Self-love at length prevailed over love for Alcibiades: ſhe received the fatal laurel, to yield, ſhe ſaid, to the acclamations and inſtances of the people: but who could believe it? She received it with a ſmiling air, and Piſicrates remounted his chariot, intoxicated with love and glory.

As ſoon as Alcibiades was recovered of his firſt dejection, "You are very weak, and very "vain," ſaid he to himſelf, "to afflict your-"ſelf to this immoderate degree! and for "what?

" what? becauſe there is found in the world " one man more dexterous, or more happy, " than myſelf. But I ſee what it is that tor- " ments you: you would have been tranſport- " ed to have conquered in the preſence of " Erigone; and you dread the thought of " being loved leſs, after being vanquiſhed. " Do her more juſtice: Erigone is not like the " ordinary run of women; ſhe will be pleaſ- " ed with you for the ardour you have ſhewn " to conquer; and as to your ill ſucceſs, ſhe " will be the firſt to make you bluſh for your " ſenſibility on ſo ſmall a misfortune. Let " us go and ſee her with confidence; I have " even cauſe to rejoice at this moment of ad- " verſity: it is a new trial of her heart, and " love contrives me a triumph more pleaſing " than would have been that of the courſe." Full of theſe conſoling ideas, he arrives at Erigone's, but finds the chariot of the con- queror at the door.

This was a clap of thunder to him. Shame, indignation, deſpair, ſeize his ſoul. Diſtracted and raging, his diſordered ſteps turn, as it were of themſelves, to the houſe of Socrates.

The honeſt man, who had been at the games, ran and met him. " Very well," ſaid he to him, " you are come to comfort your- " ſelf with me, becauſe you are overcome? " But if you had got the victory, Sirrah! I'll

" lay

" lay I ſhould not have ſeen you. I am not, " however, the leſs thankful for the viſit. I " love to have people come to me in adver- " ſity. A ſoul intoxicated with its good for- " tune vents itſelf wherever it can; the con- " fidence of a ſoul in affliction is more flat- " tering and affecting. Confeſs, however, " that your horſes did miracles. How then! " you miſſed of the prize only by one ſpring. " You may boaſt, therefore, that, next to " Piſicrates of Samos, you have the beſt " courſers in all Greece; and indeed it is a " moſt glorious thing for a man to excel in " horſes!" Alcibiades, confounded at his misfortune, did not even hear the raillery of Socrates. The philoſopher, gueſſing at the trouble of his heart by the alteration of his countenance, " What then!" ſaid he to him in a graver tone, " does a trifle, a mere " childiſh amuſement, affect you thus? If " you had loſt an empire, I could ſcarce par- " don your being in the ſtate of humiliation " and dejection wherein I now ſee you." " Ah! my dear maſter," cried Alcibiades, coming to himſelf, " how unhappy are we " in having ſenſibility! We ought to have a " ſoul of marble to live in the age we do." " I confeſs," replied Socrates, " that ſenſi- " bility coſts us dear ſometimes; but it is ſo " good a quality, that we cannot pay too dear

" for

" for it. Let us know, however, what has " befallen you."

Alcibiades recounted to him his adventures with the prude, the young lady, the widow, the magiſtrate's wife, and the courteſan, who at that very inſtant had juſt ſacrificed him to another. " What is it that you bemoan your- " ſelf for?" ſaid Socrates, after hearing his complaint: " it appears to me, that each of " them loved you after her manner with the " greateſt ſincerity in the world. The prude, " for example, loved pleaſure; ſhe found it in " you: you deprive her of it, ſhe diſmiſſes " you; and ſo with the reſt. It is their own " happineſs, never doubt it, that they ſought " in their lover. The young lady ſaw in you " a huſband whom ſhe could love with free- " dom, and with decency; the widow, a glo- " rious triumph which did honour to her " beauty; the magiſtrate's wife, an amiable " and diſcreet man, with whom, without ei- " ther danger or noiſe, her philoſophy and " her virtue might take ſome relaxation; the " courteſan a man admired, applauded, and " univerſally deſired, whom ſhe ſhould have " the ſecret pleaſure of poſſeſſing alone, while " all the beauties of Greece ſhould vainly diſ- " pute with each other the glory of capti- " vating him." " You confeſs then," ſaid Alcibiades, " that not one of them loved me

" for myſelf?" " For yourſelf," cried the philoſopher: " Ah! my dear child! who has " put this ridiculous pretenſion into your " head? None love but for themſelves. " Friendſhip itſelf, purely ſentimental as it is, " founds its preferences only on perſonal in- " tereſt; and if you demand that it ſhould " be diſintereſted, you may begin by re- " nouncing mine." " I am amazed," pur- ſued he, " to ſee how fooliſh ſelf-love is, " even in thoſe who have the beſt under- " ſtanding. I ſhould be very glad to know, " what is this SELF that you would have " them love in you? Birth, fortune, glory, " youth, talents, and beauty, are but *acci-* " *dents*. Nothing of all this is *your*-SELF, " and yet this is all that renders you amiable. " The *ſelf* which unites all theſe charms is, " in you, no more than the canvas of the " tapeſtry. It is the embroidery that gives " it value. In loving all theſe endowments " in you, they confound them with you. Do " not, I adviſe you, run into diſtinctions " which are never made; and receive, as it " is given you, the reſult of this mixture: it " is a coin of which the alloy forms the con- " ſiſtence, but which loſes its value in the " crucible. I am not ſorry that your " delicacy has detached you from the prude " and the widow; nor that the reſolution

" of

" of Rhodope, and the vanity of Erigone, " has reſtored you to liberty: but I regret " the loſs of Glycerion, and adviſe you to " return to her." " You jeſt!" ſaid Alci- " biades; ſhe is a mere child, who only " wants to be married."—" Very well, you " ſhall marry her then." —— " Did I " hear right? Socrates adviſe me to mar- " riage!" —— " Why not? If your wife " be wiſe and reaſonable, you will be a " happy man; if ſhe be a wanton, or a co- " quette, you will become a philoſopher; " you cannot do otherwiſe, therefore, than " gain by it."

SOLIMAN II.

HOW odd it is to ſee grave hiſtorians torturing themſelves, in order to find out the great cauſes of great events. Sylla's valet de chambre perhaps would have laughed heartily to hear politicians reaſons for his maſters abdication; but I do not intend to ſpeak of Sylla.

Soliman II. married his ſlave, contrary to the laws of the ſultans. From thence you conclude at once, that this ſlave was a perſon of an accompliſhed beauty, of an elevated mind, of a ſurpriſing genius, and profound knowledge in politics. No ſuch thing. Here is the fact.

Soliman became low-ſpirited in the midſt of his glory: The various pleaſures of the ſeraglio, but too eaſy to be obtained, were inſipid to him. "I am tired," ſaid he one day, "to ſee nothing here but careſſing machines. "I pity theſe ſlaves. Their ſoft docility has "no engaging, no flattering charm. What "an agreeable taſk would it be, to render "ſlavery

" ſlavery pleaſant to hearts that are brought " up in the boſom of Liberty!"

The fancies of a ſultan are laws to his miniſters. Great ſums of money were promiſed to any perſon, who ſhould bring European ſlaves to the ſeraglio. In a ſhort time there came three, who, like the three Graces, ſeemed to vie with one another in all the charms of beauty.

Noble and modeſt features, tender and languiſhing eyes, a candid diſpoſition of mind, and a ſoul full of ſenſibility, diſtinguiſhed the touching Elmira. The entrance to the ſeraglio, the image of ſlavery, had chilled her with the greateſt pannic. Soliman found her fainting in the arms of the women. He approaches; he recalls her to life; he encourages her; ſhe lifts up to him a pair of large blue eyes, bedewed with tears; he reaches forth his hand to her; he ſupports her himſelf; ſhe follows him with a tottering ſtep. The ſlaves retire; and as ſoon as he is alone with her, " It is not with fear, beautiful " Elmira," ſaid he to her, " that I would " inſpire you. Forget that you have a ma- " ſter; ſee in me only a lover." " The " name of lover," ſaid ſhe to him, " is not " leſs unknown to me than that of maſter: " and both the one and the other make me " tremble. They have told me, (and I ſtill

" ſhudder at the thought) that I am deſtined
" to your pleaſures. Alas! what pleaſure
" can it be to tyrannize over weakneſs and
" innocence? Believe me, I am not capable
" of the compliances of ſervitude; and the
" only pleaſure poſſible for you to taſte with
" me, is that of being generous. Reſtore me
" to my parents, and to my country; and
" in the reſpect you ſhow for my virtue, my
" youth, and my misfortunes, merit my gra-
" titude, my eſteem, and my regret."

This diſcourſe from a ſlave was new to Soliman: his great ſoul was moved by it. "No," ſaid he, " my dear child, I will owe nothing
" to violence. You charm me: I will make
" it my happineſs to love and pleaſe you; and
" I prefer the torment of never ſeeing you
" more to that of ſeeing you unhappy. How-
" ever, before I reſtore you to liberty, give
" me leave to try, at leaſt, whether it be not
" poſſible for me to diſſipate that terrour
" which the name of ſlave ſtrikes into you.
" I aſk only one month's trial, after which,
" if my love cannot move you, I will avenge
" myſelf no otherwiſe on your ingratitude, than
" by delivering you up to the inconſtancy and
" perfidy of men." " Ah! my lord!" cried Almira, with an emotion mixed with joy, " how unjuſt are the prejudices of my country,
" and how little are your virtues known there!

" Continue

" Continue ſuch as I now ſee you, and I no-
" longer reckon this day unfortunate."

Some moments after, ſhe ſaw ſlaves enter, carrying baſkets filled with ſtuffs and valuable trinkets. " Chuſe," ſaid the Sultan to her; " theſe are clothes, not ornaments, that are " here preſented to you: nothing can adorn " you." " Decide for me," ſaid Elmira to him, running her eyes over the baſkets. " Do " not conſult me," replied the Sultan: " I " hate, without diſtinction, every thing that " can rob me of your charms." Elmira bluſhed; and the Sultan perceived ſhe preferred the colours moſt favourable to the character of her beauty. He conceived a pleaſing hope from it. Care to adorn one's ſelf is almoſt a deſire to pleaſe.

The month of trial paſſed away in gallantries timid on the Sultan's ſide, and on Elmira's, in complacency and delicate reſpects. Her confidence in him grew every day imperceptibly. At firſt he was not allowed to viſit her but after the *toilette*, and till ſhe undreſſed; very ſoon he got admiſſion both to the *toilette* and *diſhabille*. It was there that the plan of their amuſements for that day and the next was formed. Whatever either propoſed was exactly what the other was going to propoſe. Their diſputes turned only on the ſtealing of thoughts. Elmira, in theſe diſputes, perceived

nues of pleaſure through which he had only paſſed rapidly with his ſlaves from Aſia, appeared to him ſo delicious with Elmira, that he found an expreſſible charm in going thro' them ſtep by ſtep: but arrived at the happineſs itſelf, his pleaſures had from that time the ſame defect that they had before; they became too eaſy of acceſs, and in a ſhort time after too languid. Their days, ſo well filled up till then, began to have great gaps in them. In one of theſe moments, when complaiſance alone retained Soliman with Elmira, "Would "it be agreeable to you," ſaid he, "to hear "a ſlave from your own country, whoſe voice "has been greatly commended to me?" Elmira, at the propoſal, plainly perceived that ſhe was loſt: but to put any conſtraint on a lover who begins to grow tired, is to tire him ſtill more. "I am for any thing," ſaid ſhe, "that you pleaſe;" and the ſlave was ordered to enter.

Delia (that was the name of the ſinger) had the ſhape of a goddeſs. Her hair was blacker than ebony, and her ſkin whiter than ivory. Two eye-brows, boldly arched, crowned her ſparkling eyes. As ſoon as ſhe began tuning, her lips, which were of the fineſt vermilion, diſplayed two rows of pearl ſet in coral. At firſt ſhe ſung the victories of Soliman, and the hero felt his ſoul elevated at the remembrance

berance of his triumphs. His pride hitherto, more than his taſte, applauded the accents of that thrilling voice, which filled the whole ſaloon with its harmonious nervouſneſs.

Delia changed her manner, to ſing the charms of pleaſure. She then took the theorbo, an inſtrument favourable to the diſplay of a rounded arm, and to the movements of a delicate and light hand. Her voice, more flexible and tender, now reſounded none but the moſt touching ſounds. Her modulations, connected by imperceptible gradations, expreſſed the delirium of a ſoul intoxicated with pleaſure, or exhauſted with ſentiment. Her ſounds, ſometimes expiring on her lips, ſometimes ſwelled, and ſunk with rapidity, expreſſed by turns the ſighs of modeſty and the vehemence of deſire; while her eyes ſtill more than her voice animated theſe lively deſcriptions.

Soliman, quite tranſported, devoured her both with his ears and eyes. "No," ſaid he, "never before did ſo beautiful a mouth "utter ſuch pleaſing ſounds. With what "delight muſt ſhe, who ſings ſo feelingly "of pleaſure, inſpire and reliſh it! How "charming to draw that harmonious breath, "and to catch again in their paſſage thoſe "ſounds animated by love!" The Sultan, loſt in theſe reflections, perceived not that all the while

while he kept beating time on the knee of the trembling Elmira. Her heart oppreſſed with jealouſy, ſhe was ſcarce able to breathe. "How happy is ſhe," ſaid ſhe, in a low voice, to Soliman, "to have ſo tunable a "voice! Alas! it ought to be the organ of "my heart! every thing that ſhe expreſſes, "you have taught me to feel."" "So," ſaid Elmira, but Soliman did not liſten to her.

Delia changed her tone a ſecond time to inconſtancy, All that the changeful variety of Nature contains, either intereſting or amiable, was recapitulated in her ſong. It ſeemed like the fluttering of the butterfly over roſes, or like the Zephyrs, loſing themſelves among the flowers. "Liſten to the turtle," ſaid Delia, "ſhe is faithful but melancholy. See the in-"conſtant ſparrow: pleaſure moves his wings; "his warbling voice is exerted merely to re-"turn thanks to love. Water freezes only "in ſtagnation; a heart never languiſhes but "in conſtancy. There is but one mortal on "earth, whom it is poſſible to love always. "Let him change, let him enjoy the advan-"tage of making a thouſand hearts happy; "all prevent his wiſhes, or purſue him. They "adore him in their own arms; they love him "even in the arms of another. Let him "give himſelf up to our deſires, or withdraw "himſelf from them, ſtill he will find love "wherever

" wherever he goes, wherever he goes will " leave the print of love on his footſteps."

Elmira was no longer able to diſſemble her diſpleaſure and grief. She gets up and retires: the ſultan does not recal her, and while ſhe is overwhelming herſelf with tears, repeating a thouſand times, " Ah! the ungrateful, Ah! " the perfidious man!" Soliman, charmed with his divine ſongſtreſs, prepares to realize with her ſome of thoſe pictures which ſhe had drawn ſo much to the life. The next morning the unhappy Elmira writ a billet filled with reproach and tenderneſs, in which ſhe puts him in mind of the promiſe he had made her. " That is true," ſaid the Sultan: " let us " ſend her back to her country, loaden with " marks of my favour. This poor girl loves " me dearly, and I am to blame on her ac- " count."

The firſt emotions of his love for Delia was nothing but an inebriation; but when he had time to reflect, he obſerved that ſhe was more petulant than ſenſible, fonder of pleaſure than flattered with giving any, in a word, more worthy than he to have a ſeraglio ſubjected to her laws. To feed his illuſion, he ſometimes invited Delia, that he might hear that voice which had enchanted him; but that voice was no longer the ſame. The impreſſion made by it became every day weaker and

weaker by habitude; and it was now no more than a ſlight emotion, when an unforeſeen circumſtance diſſipated it for ever.

The chief officer of the ſeraglio came to inform the Sultan, that it was no longer poſſible to manage the untractable vivacity of one of the European ſlaves; that ſhe made a jeſt of his prohibitions and menaces; and that ſhe anſwered him only by cutting railleries and immoderate burſts of laughter. Soliman, who was too great a prince to make a ſtate-affair of what merely regarded the regulation of his pleaſures, entertained a curioſity of ſeeing this young madcap. He repaired to her, followed by the eunuch. As ſoon as ſhe ſaw Soliman, "Heaven be praiſed!" ſaid ſhe, "here "comes a human figure! You are without "doubt the ſublime ſultan, whoſe ſlave I have "the honour to be? Do me the favour to drive "away this old knave, who ſhocks my very "ſight." The Sultan had a good deal of difficulty to refrain laughing at this beginning. "Roxalana," ſaid he to her, (for ſo ſhe was called) "ſhow ſome reſpect, if you pleaſe, "to the miniſter of my pleaſures: you are yet "a ſtranger to the manners of the ſeraglio; "till they can inſtruct you in them, contain "yourſelf, and obey." "A fine compli-"ment," ſaid Roxalana. "*Obey!* Is that "your Turkiſh gallantry? Sure you muſt be "mightily

" mightily beloved, if it is in this ſtrain you " begin your addreſſes to the ladies! " *Re-* " *ſpect the miniſter of my pleaſures!* You have " your pleaſures then? and, good Heaven, " what pleaſures, if they reſemble their mi- " niſter! an old amphibious monſter, who " keeps us here, penned in, like ſheep in a " fold, and who prowls round with his fright- " ful eyes always ready to devour us! See " here the confident of your pleaſures, and " the guardian of our prudence! Give him " his due, if you pay him to make yourſelf " hated, he does not cheat you of any of his " wages. We cannot take a ſtep but he " growls. He forbids us even to walk, and " to receive or pay viſits. In a ſhort time, " I ſuppoſe, he will weigh out the air to us, " and give us the light by meaſure. If you " had ſeen him rave laſt night, becauſe he " found me in theſe ſolitary gardens!—Did " you order him to forbid our going into " them? Are you afraid that it ſhould rain " men? And if there ſhould fall a few from " the clouds, what a misfortune! Heaven " owes us this miracle."

As Roxelana was ſpeaking thus, the Sultan examined with ſurpriſe the fire of her eyes, and the play of her countenance. " By Ma- " homet!" ſaid he within himſelf, " there " is the moſt beautiful face in all Aſia. Eu-

" rope is the only place where ſuch faces are " made." Roxalana had nothing fine, nothing regular in her features; but, taken all together, they had that ſmart ſingularity, which touches more than beauty. A ſpeaking look, a mouth freſh and roſy, an arch ſmile, a noſe ſomewhat turned up, a neat and well-made ſhape; all theſe circumſtances gave her giddineſs a charm which diſconcerted the gravity of Soliman. But the great, in his ſituation, have the reſource of ſilence; and Soliman, not knowing how to anſwer her, fairly walked off, concealing his embarraſſment under an air of majeſty.

The eunuch aſked him what orders he would be pleaſed to give with reſpect to this ſaucy ſlave. " She is a mere child," replied the Sultan; " you muſt paſs over ſome " things in her."

The air, the tone, the figure, the diſpoſition of Roxalana, had excited in the ſoul of Soliman an anxiety and emotion which ſleep was not able to diſpel. When, as ſoon as he awoke, he ordered the chief of the eunuchs to come to him. " You ſeem to me," ſaid he, " to be but little in Roxalana's good " graces; in order to make your peace, go " and tell her, I will come and drink tea " with her." On the arrival of the officer, Roxalana's women haſtened to wake her.

" What

"What does the ape want with me!" cried ſhe, rubbing her eyes. "I come," replied the eunuch, "from the Emperour, to kiſs "the duſt of your feet, and to inform you, "that he will come and drink tea with the "delight of his ſoul."—"Away with your "ſtrange ſpeeches! My feet have no duſt, "and I do not drink tea ſo early."

The eunuch retired without replying, and gave an account of his embaſſy. "She is in "the right," ſaid the Sultan; "why did you "wake her? You do every thing wrong." As ſoon as it was broad day with Roxalana, he went there. "You are angry with me?" ſaid he: "they have diſturbed your ſleep, and "I am the innocent cauſe of it. Come, let "us make peace; imitate me: you ſee that "I forget all that you ſaid to me yeſterday." —"You forget it! So much the worſe: I ſaid "ſome good things to you. My frankneſs "diſpleaſes you, I ſee plainly: but you will "ſoon grow accuſtomed to it. And are you "not too happy to find a friend in a ſlave? "Yes, a friend, who intereſts herſelf in your "welfare, and who would teach you to love. "Why have not you made a voyage to my "country? It is there that they know love: "it is there that it is lively and tender; and "why? Becauſe it is free. Sentiment in- "ſpires itſelf, and does not come by force.

" The yoke of marriage amongſt us is much
" lighter than that of ſlavery; and yet a huſ-
" band that is beloved, is a prodigy. Every
" thing that takes the name of duty ſaddens
" the ſoul, blaſts the imagination, cools de-
" ſire, and takes off that edge of ſelf-love
" which gives all the reliſh and ſeaſoning to
" love. Now, if it is ſo difficult to love a
" huſband, how much harder is it to love a
" maſter, eſpecially if he has not the addreſs
" to conceal the fetters he puts upon us?"
" And I," replied the Sultan, " I will for-
" get nothing to ſoften your ſervitude; but
" you ought in your turn——" " I ought!
" nothing but what one ought! Leave off,
" I prithee now, theſe humiliating phraſes.
" They come with a very ill grace from the
" mouth of a man of gallantry, who has the
" honour of talking to a pretty woman."—
" But, Roxalana, do you forget who I am,
" and who you are?"—" Who you are,
" and who I am? You are powerful, I am
" pretty: thus, I believe, we are even."
" That may be ſo," replied the Sultan haugh-
" tily, " in your country; but here, Roxa-
" lana, I am maſter, and you a ſlave."——
" Yes, I know you have purchaſed me; but
" the robber who ſold me could transfer to
" you only thoſe rights over me which he
" had himſelf, the rights of rapine and vio-
" lence;

" lence; in one word, the rights of a rob-
" ber; and you are too honeſt a man to think
" of abuſing them. After all, you are my
" maſter, becauſe my life is in your hands;
" but I am no longer your ſlave if I know
" how to deſpiſe life; and truly the life one
" leads here is not worth the fear of loſing
" it." " What a frightful notion!" cried the Sultan: " do you take me for a barba-
" rian? No, my dear Roxalana, I would
" make uſe of my power only to render this
" life delightful to yourſelf and me." " Upon
" my word," ſaid Roxalana, the proſpect is
" not very promiſing. Theſe guards, for
" inſtance, ſo black, ſo diſguſting, ſo ugly,
" are they the Smiles and Sports which here
" accompany love?"—" Theſe guards are
" not ſet upon you alone. I have five hun-
" dred women, whom our manners and laws
" oblige me to keep watched." " And why
" five hundred women?" ſaid ſhe to him, with an air of confidence. " It is a kind of
" ſtate which the dignity of ſultan impoſes upon
" me."—" But what do you do with them,
" pray? for you lend them to nobody." " In-
" conſtancy," replied the Sultan, " has intro-
" duced this cuſtom. A heart which loves
" not, ſtands in need of change. It is for
" a lover only to be faithful, and I am my-
" ſelf become one but ſince I have ſeen you.
" Let

" Let the number of theſe women give you no " ſhadow of uneaſineſs; they ſhall ſerve only " to grace your triumph. You ſhall ſee them " all eager to pleaſe you, and you ſhall ſee " me attentive to no one but yourſelf." " In- " deed," ſaid Roxalana, with an air of com- paſſion, " you merit a better fate. It is pity " you are not a plain private gentleman in " my country; I ſhould then be weak enough " to entertain ſome ſort of kindneſs for you: " for at the bottom it is not you that I hate, " it is that which ſurrounds you. You are " much better than is common for a Turk: " you have even ſomething of the Frenchman " in you, and I have loved, without flattery, " ſome who were not ſo deſerving as yourſelf." " You have loved!" cried Soliman, with hor- rour! " Oh! not at all; I took care of that!" —" Do not you pretend that one muſt have " been prudent all one's life-time, in order to " ceaſe being ſo with you? Indeed theſe Turks " are pleaſant people."—" And you have not " been prudent? O Heavens! what do I hear? " I am betrayed, I am loſt! Deſtruction ſeize " the traitors who meant to impoſe upon me." " Forgive them," ſaid Roxalana, " the poor " creatures are not to blame. The moſt " knowing are often deceived. For the reſt, " the misfortune is not very great. Why " do not you reſtore me to my liberty, if you

" think

" think me unworthy of the honours of ſlave-
" ry ?"—" Yes, yes, I will reſtore you to
" that liberty, of which you have made ſo
" good uſe." At theſe words, the Sultan re-
tired in a rage, ſaying to himſelf, " I plainly
" foreſaw that this little turned-up noſe had
" made a ſlip."

Who can expreſs the confuſion wherein the imprudent confeſſion of Roxelana had caſt him ? Sometimes he wants that ſhe ſhould be diſmiſſed ; ſometimes, confined ; then, that ſhe ſhould be brought to his preſence ; and then, again, that ſhe ſhould be ſent away. The great Soliman no longer knows what he ſays. " My
" Lord," remonſtrated the eunuch, " can
" you fall into deſpair for a trifle ? One girl
" more, or one leſs ; is there any thing ſo
" uncommon in her ? Beſides, who knows
" whether the confeſſion ſhe has made be not
" an artifice to get herſelf ſent back to her own
" country ?"—" What ſay you ? how ! can
" it be poſſible ? It is the very thing. He
" opens my eyes. Women are not uſed to
" avow ſuch truths. It is a trick, a ſtratagem.
" Ah ! the perfidious huſſy ! Let us diſſemble
" in our turn : I will drive her to the laſt
" extremity.—Hark ye ! go and tell her. . . .
" that I invite her to ſup with me this even-
" ing.—But no, order the ſongſtreſs to come
" here : it is better to ſend her."

Delia-

Delia was charged to employ all her art to engage the confidence of Roxalana. As ſoon as the latter had heard what ſhe had to ſay, "What!" ſaid ſhe, "young and handſome as "you are, he charges you with his meſſages, "and you have the weakneſs to obey him! "Get you gone, you are not worthy to be "my countrywoman. Ah! I ſee plainly that "they ſpoil him, and that I alone muſt take "upon me to teach this Turk how to live. I "am going to ſend him word that I keep you "to ſup with me; I muſt have him make ſome "atonement for his impertinence."—"But, "Madam, he will take it ill."—"He! I ſhould "be glad to ſee him take any thing ill which I "think well of."—"But it ſeemed to me that "he was deſirous of ſeeing you alone."—"A- "lone! ah! it is not come to that yet; and I "ſhall make him go over a good deal of "ground, before we have any thing particular "to ſay to each other."

The Sultan was as much ſurpriſed as piqued to learn that they ſhould have a third perſon. However he repaired early to Roxalana's. As ſoon as ſhe ſaw him coming, ſhe ran to meet him with as eaſy an air, as if they had been upon the beſt footing in the world together. "There," ſays ſhe, "is a handſome man "come to ſup with us!—Do you like him, "Madam? Confeſs, Soliman, that I am a "good

" good friend. Come, draw near, ſalute the " lady. There! very well. Now, thank me. " Softly! I do not like to have people dwell " too long on their acknowledgments. Won- " derful! I aſſure you he ſurpriſes me. He has " had but two leſſons, and ſee how he is im- " proved! I do not deſpair of making him, " one day or other, a Frenchman."

Do but imagine the aſtoniſhment of a ſultan, a ſultan, the conqueror of Aſia, to ſee himſelf treated like a ſchoolboy by a ſlave of eighteen. During ſupper, her gaiety and extravagance were inconceivable. The Sultan was beſide himſelf with joy. He queſtioned her concerning the manners of Europe. One picture followed another. Our prejudices, our follies, our humours, all were laid hold of, all repreſented. Soliman thought himſelf in Paris. " The witty " rogue!" cried he, " witty rogue!" From Europe ſhe fell upon Aſia. This was much worſe: the haughtineſs of the men, the weakneſs of the women, the dullneſs of their ſociety, the filthy gravity of their amours, nothing eſcaped her, tho' ſhe had ſeen nothing but curſorily. The ſeraglio had its turn; and Roxalana began by felicitating the Sultan on having been the firſt to imagine, that he could enſure the virtue of the women, by the abſolute impotence of the blacks. She was preparing to enlarge upon the honour that this circumſtance

of

of his reign would do him in hiſtory; but he begged her to ſpare him. "There," ſaid ſhe, "I perceive that I take up thoſe moments "which Delia could fill up much better. "Throw yourſelf at her feet, to obtain from "her one of thoſe airs which, they ſay, ſhe "ſings with ſo much taſte and ſpirit." Delia did not ſuffer herſelf to be entreated. Roxalana appeared charmed: ſhe aſked Soliman, in a low voice, for a handkerchief; he gave her one, without the leaſt ſuſpicion of her deſign. "Ma-"dam," ſaid ſhe to Delia, preſenting it to her, "it is on the part of the Sultan that I give you "the handkerchief; you have well deſerved "it." "Yes, without diſpute," ſaid Soliman, tranſported with anger; and, preſenting his hand to the ſongſtreſs, retired along with her.

As ſoon as they were alone, "I confeſs," ſaid he to her, "that this giddy girl confounds "me. You ſee the ſtile in which ſhe treats "me. I have not the courage to begin with "her. In a word, I am mad, and I know "not what method to take to bring her down." "My Lord," ſaid Delia, "I believe I have "diſcovered her temper. Authority can do "nothing. You have nothing for it but ex-treme coldneſs, or extreme gallantry. Cold-neſs may pique her; but I am afraid we are "too far gone for that. She knows that you "love her. She will enjoy in ſecret the pain

"that

" that this will coſt you, and you will come " to ſooner than ſhe. This method beſides " is diſagreeable and painful; and if one mo- " ment's weakneſs ſhould eſcape you, it will " be all to begin again." " Very well," ſaid the Sultan, " let us try gallantry."

In the ſeraglio from that time there was every day a new feſtival, of which Roxalana was the object; but ſhe received all this as an homage that was due to her, without concern and without pleaſure, with a cool complaiſance. The Sultan aſked her ſometimes, " How " did you like thoſe ſports, thoſe concerts, " thoſe ſpectacles?" " Well enough," ſaid ſhe; " but there was ſomething wanting."— " And what!"—" Men and liberty."

Soliman was in deſpair: he had recourſe to Delia. " Upon my word," ſaid the ſongſtreſs, " I know nothing elſe that can touch he, at " leaſt unleſs glory have a ſhare in it. You re- " ceive to-morrow the ambaſſadours of your " allies; cannot I bring her to ſee this cere- " mony behind a curtain, which may conceal " us from the eyes of your court?" " And " do you think," ſaid the Sultan, " that this " would make any impreſſion on her?" " I " hope ſo," ſaid Delia: " the women of her " country love glory." " You charm me," cried Soliman! " Yes, my dear Delia, I ſhall " owe my happineſs to you."

After that ceremony, which he took care to render as ſplendid as he could, he went to Roxalana. "Be gone," ſays ſhe, "be gone "from me, and never ſee me again." The Sultan was ſtruck motionleſs and dumb with amazement. "Is this then," purſued ſhe, "your art of love? Glory and grandeur, the "only good things worthy to touch the ſoul, "are reſerved for you alone; ſhame and ob- "livion, the moſt inſupportable of all evils, "are my portion; and you would have me love "you! I hate you worſe than death." The Sultan would fain have turned this reproach into raillery. "Nothing is more ſerious," re- ſumed ſhe. "If my lover had but a hut, I "would ſhare his hut with him, and be con- "tent. He has a throne; I will ſhare his "throne, or he is no lover of mine. If you "think me unworthy to reign over the Turks, "ſend me back to my own country, where "all the handſome women are ſovereigns, and "much more abſolute than I ſhould be here; "for it is over hearts that they reign." "The "ſovereignty of mine then is not ſufficient for "you?" ſaid Soliman, with the moſt tender air in the world.—"No, I deſire no heart "which has pleaſures that I have not. Talk "to me no more of your feaſts, all mere pa- "ſtimes for children, I muſt have embaſſies." —"But, Roxalana, you are either mad, or

"you

" you dream." — " And what do you find " then ſo extravagant in deſiring to reign with " you? Am I made in ſuch a manner as to " diſgrace a throne? And do you think that " I ſhould have diſplayed leſs greatneſs and " dignity than you in aſſuring our ſubjects " and allies of our protection?" " I think," ſaid the Sultan, " that you would do every " thing with gracefulneſs; but it depends not " on me to ſatisfy your ambition, and I be- " ſeech you to think no more of it."—" I " think no more of it! Oh! I promiſe you I " ſhall think of nothing elſe, and I will from " henceforward dream of nothing but a ſcep- " tre, a crown, an embaſſy." She kept her word. The next morning ſhe had already contrived the deſign of her diadem; ſhe had already ſettled every thing, except the colour of the ribband which was to tie it. She ordered rich ſtuffs to be brought her for her habits of ceremony; and as ſoon as the Sultan appeared, ſhe aſked his opinion on the choice. He exerted all his endeavours to divert her from this idea; but contradiction plunged her into the deepeſt melancholy; and to draw her out of it again, he was obliged to flatter her illuſion. Then ſhe diſplayed the moſt brilliant gaiety. He ſeized theſe moments to talk to her of love; but without liſtening to him, ſhe talked to him of politics. All her anſwers

were already prepared to the harangues of the deputies on her acceſſion to the crown. She had even formed projects of regulations for the territories of the Grand Seignor. She would make them plant vines and build opera-houſes; ſuppreſs the eunuchs, becauſe they were good for nothing; ſhut up the jealous, becauſe they diſturbed ſociety; and baniſh all ſelf-intereſted perſons, becauſe ſooner or later they became rogues. The Sultan amuſed himſelf for ſome time with theſe follies; nevertheleſs he ſtill burnt with the moſt violent love, without any hope of being happy. On the leaſt ſuſpicion of violence ſhe became furious, and was ready to kill herſelf. On the other hand, Soliman found not the ambition of Roxalana ſo very fooliſh: "For, in ſhort," ſaid he, "is it not "cruel to be alone, deprived of the happi- "neſs of aſſociating to my fortune a woman "whom I eſteem and love? All my ſubjects "may have a lawful wife; an abſurd law "forbids marriage to me alone." Thus ſpoke love, but policy put him to ſilence. He took the reſolution of confiding to Roxalana the reaſons which reſtrained him. "I would "make it," ſaid he, "my happineſs to leave "nothing wanting to yours; but our manners" —"Idle ſtories!—"Our laws"—"Old ſongs!" —"the prieſts"—"What care they?"—"The "people and the ſoldiery"—"What is it to them? "Will

" Will they be more wretched when you ſhall " have me for your conſort? You have very " little love, if you have ſo little courage!" She prevailed ſo far, that Soliman was aſhamed of being ſo fearful. He orders the mufti, the viſir, the camaican, the aga of the ſea, and the aga of the janiſſaries, to come to him; and he ſays to them, " I have carried, as far " as I was able, the glory of the creſcent; I " have eſtabliſhed the power and peace of my " empire; and I deſire nothing, by way of re- " compenſe for my labours, but to enjoy with " the good-will of my ſubjects a bleſſing " which they all enjoy. I know not what " law, but it is one that is not derived down " to us from the prophet, forbids the ſultans " the ſweets of the marriage-bed: thence I " perceive myſelf reduced to the condition of " ſlaves, whom I deſpiſe; and I have reſolved " to marry a woman whom I adore. Prepare " my people then for this marriage. If they " approve it, I receive their approbation as a " mark of their gratitude; but if they dare " to murmur at it, tell them that I will have " it ſo." The aſſembly received the Sultan's orders with a reſpectful ſilence, and the people followed their example.

Soliman, tranſported with joy and love, went to fetch Roxalana, in order to lead her to the moſque; and ſaid to himſelf in a

low voice, as he was conducting her thither, " Is it poſſible that a little turned-up " noſe ſhould overturn the laws of an em- " pire ?"

THE SCRUPLE; Or, LOVE diſſatisfied with itſelf.

" GOD be praiſed," ſaid Beliſa, on going out of mourning for her huſband: " a very afflicting and painful duty I have " juſt now fulfilled ! It was time, and full " time, it ſhould end. What ! At the age of " ſixteen to ſee myſelf given away to a man that " I do not know ; to ſpend the bloom of my " life in dullneſs, diſſimulation, and ſervitude; " to be a ſlave, and the victim of a love I in- " ſpire, and which I cannot partake : what a " teſt for virtue ! I have gone through this ſe- " vere hardſhip, and now I am free of it. I " have nothing to reproach myſelf with : for " in ſhort I did not love my huſband ; but I " ſeemed to love him, and that is a thing " much more heroic. Notwithſtanding his " jealouſy, I was faithful to him ; in one " word, I have ſhed tears for him : That is,

" I think,

"I think, going to as great lengths as the "goodneſs of the ſoul can well reach. At "length reſtored to myſelf, I no longer de- "pend on any thing but my own will, and it "is only from to-day that I am going to begin "to live. Ah! how my heart would take fire, "if any one ſhould ſucceed ſo far as to pleaſe "me! But let me conſider well before I en- "gage this heart of mine, and let me not, if "poſſible, run the riſk either of ceaſing to love, "or of ceaſing to be loved. Ceaſe to be loved! "That, I believe, is a difficult matter," reſumed ſhe, conſulting at the ſame time her looking glaſs; "but to ceaſe to love is ſtill "worſe. How could one feign for any con- "ſiderable time a paſſion we do not feel? I "ſhould never be able to do it. To leave a "man after we have taken to him is a piece of "effrontery beyond me; and then complaints, "deſpair, the noiſe of a rupture, all that is "frightful. Let me love, ſince Heaven has "given me a ſenſible heart; but let me love my "whole life long, and not flatter myſelf with "thoſe tranſient likings, thoſe capricious fan- "cies which are ſo often taken for love. I have "time to chuſe and try myſelf: the only thing "to be done to avoid all ſurpriſe, is to form "a diſtinct and exact notion of love. I have "read that love is a paſſion, which of two "ſouls makes but one, which pierces them at

"the

" the ſame time, and fills them one with the
" other, which detaches them from every thing,
" which is to them inſtead of every thing,
" and which makes their mutual happineſs their
" only care and deſire. Such, without doubt, is
" love; and according to this idea of it, it will
" be very eaſy for me to diſtinguiſh in myſelf,
" and in others, the illuſion from the reality."

Her firſt experiment was made on a young magiſtrate, with whom the diviſion of her huſband's inheritance gave her ſome connexion. The Preſident de S——, with an agreeable figure, a cultivated underſtanding, a ſweet and ſenſible temper, was ſimple in his dreſs, eaſy in his manner, and modeſt in his converſation. He valued himſelf neither on being a connoiſſeur, in equipages, nor fineries. He talked not of his horſes to the women, nor of his intrigues to the men. He had all the talents becoming his place without oſtentation, and all the agreeable qualities of a man of the world without being a coxcomb. He was the ſame at court and in company: not that he paſt decrees at an entertainment, or rallied when he heard cauſes; but as he had not the leaſt affectation, he was always without diſguiſe.

Beliſa was touched with ſuch uncommon merit. He had gained her confidence; he obtained her friendſhip, and under that name

the

the heart goes a great way. The affairs of Beliſa's huſband being ſettled, " May I be " permitted," ſaid the preſident one day to the widow, " to aſk you one queſtion in con- " fidence? Do you propoſe to remain free, " or ſhall the ſacrifice of your liberty ſtill make " one more happy man?" " No, Sir," ſaid ſhe, " I have too much delicacy ever to make " it a duty to any one to live only for me." " That duty would be a very pleaſing one," replied the gallant magiſtrate, " and I greatly " fear, that without your conſent more than " one lover will impoſe it upon himſelf." " So " much the better," ſaid Beliſa; " let them " love me without being obliged to it: it is the " moſt pleaſing of all homages."—" Yet, Ma- " dam, I cannot ſuſpect you of being a co- " quette."—" Oh! you would be wrong if " you did; for I abominate coquetry."—" But " to deſire to be loved without loving again!" —" And who, Sir, has told you that I ſhall " not love? Such reſolutions are not taken at " my age. I would neither conſtrain, nor be " conſtrained: that is all."—" Very well: you " deſire then that the engagement ſhould ceaſe " where the inclination ſhall end?"—" I de- " ſire that both the one and the other ſhould " be eternal, and it is for that reaſon I would " avoid even the ſhadow of conſtraint. I feel " myſelf capable of loving all my life long in " liberty;

" liberty; but to tell you the truth, I would " not promiſe to love two days in ſlavery."

The preſident ſaw well, that there was an abſolute neceſſity to ſpare her delicacy, and content himſelf with aſſuming the title of a friend. His modeſty condeſcended ſo far, and from that time every thing affecting in love was put in practice to move her. He ſucceeded. I ſhall not mention the degrees by which Beliſa's ſenſibility was every day more and more affected; let it ſuffice to know, that ſhe was now come to that paſs when prudence, in equipoiſe with love, waits only one ſlight effort to let the balance turn. They were at this point, and were *tête a-tête*. The preſident's eyes, inflamed with love, devoured the charms of Beliſa; he preſſed her hand tenderly. Beliſa trembling, hardly breathed. The preſident ſolicited her with the impaſſioned eloquence of deſire. " Ah! preſident," ſaid ſhe to him at laſt, " could you be capable " of deceiving me?" At theſe words the laſt ſigh of modeſty ſeemed to have eſcaped her lips. " No, Madam," ſaid he, " it is my " heart, it is love himſelf who has juſt ſpoken " by my mouth, and may I die at your feet " if—" As he fell at Beliſa's feet, his knee came upon one of *Shock*'s paws, the young widow's favourite lap-dog. *Shock* ſet up an howl with the pain. " Lord, Sir, how aukward

" you

" you are!" cried Beliſa with an emotion of anger. The preſident coloured, and was diſconcerted. He took *Shock* to his boſom, kiſſed the injured paw, aſked his pardon a thouſand times, and entreated him to ſolicit his forgiveneſs. *Shock*, recovered of his pain, returned the preſident his careſſes. " You ſee, " Madam, he has good-nature; he forgives " me; it is a fine example for you." Beliſa made no reply. She was fallen into a profound reverie, and a cold gravity. He wanted at firſt to take this gravity for a little playfulneſs, and throw himſelf again at Beliſa's feet in order to appeaſe her. " Pray, Sir, get up," ſaid ſhe to him; " theſe freedoms diſpleaſe " me, and I do not know that I have given " any room for them."

Imagine the preſident's aſtoniſhment. He was confounded for two whole minutes, without being able to bring out a word. " What! " Madam," ſaid he to her at laſt, " can it be " poſſible that ſo trivial an accident has drawn " your anger upon me?"—" Not at all, Sir; " but I may without anger take it ill that any " one ſhould throw himſelf at my feet: it is " a ſituation that ſuits only happy lovers, and " I eſteem you too much to ſuſpect your ha- " ving dared to pretend to be one." " I do " not ſee, Madam," replied the preſident with emotion, " why a hope founded on love ſhould

" render

" render me leſs worthy of eſteem; but may " I preſume to aſk you, ſince love is a crime " in your eyes, what is the nature of the ſen- " timent you have expreſſed towards me?"— " Friendſhip, Sir, friendſhip; and I deſire " you very ſeriouſly to keep to that."—" I aſk " your pardon, Madam; I ſhould have ſworn " that it had been ſomewhat elſe; I ſee plainly " that I was miſtaken." — " That may be, " Sir; many others are miſtaken, as well as " yourſelf." The preſident could no longer ſuſtain the ſhock of ſo ſtrange an inſtance of caprice. He went away with deſpair in his ſoul, and was not recalled.

As ſoon as Beliſa found herſelf alone, " Was " not I going to be guilty of a fine piece of " folly?" ſaid ſhe with indignation. " I have " ſeen the moment when my weakneſs was " going to yield to a man whom I loved not. " They may well ſay, that we know nothing " leſs than ourſelves. I could have ſworn " that I adored him, that there was nothing " which I was not diſpoſed to ſacrifice to him: " no ſuch thing: he happens, without in- " tending it, to hurt my little dog, and this " violent love immediately gives place to an- " ger. A dog touches me more than he, and " without a moment's heſitation I take the " part of this little animal againſt the man in " the world whom I thought I loved beſt.

" A

" A very lively paſſion indeed, mighty ſolid,
" and tender! See how we take ideas for
" ſentiments! The brain is heated, and we
" fancy the heart inflamed: we proceed from
" thence to all manner of follies; the illuſion
" ceaſes, and diſguſt ſucceeds: we muſt ex-
" perience the weariſomeneſs of being conſtant
" without love, or change with indecency.
" O! my dear *Shoc?*, what do I not owe you?
" It is you that have undeceived me. But
" for you, I ſhould perhaps have been at this
" moment overwhelmed with confuſion, and
" torn with remorſe.

Whether Beliſa did or did not love the preſident, (for queſtions of this nature turn merely on the equivocation of terms) it is certain, that on the ſtrength of ſaying to herſelf that ſhe did not love him, ſhe ſucceeded ſo far as to convince herſelf of it; and a young officer ſoon confirmed her in her opinion.

Lindor had juſt got a troop of horſe after having ſerved his Majeſty in quality of a page. The freſhneſs of youth, the impatience of deſire, levity and giddineſs, which are *graces* at ſixteen, but *fopperies* at thirty, dazzled the eyes of Beliſa, this youth had the honour of being a relation to her huſband's family. Lindor was extremely fond of himſelf, and not without reaſon; he knew that he was well made, and of a charming figure. He ſaid ſo

ſometimes; but he laughed ſo heartily after he had ſaid it, he diſcovered in laughing ſo freſh a mouth and ſuch fine teeth, that theſe ſimplicities were pardoned at his age. He mingled beſides ſuch lofty and noble ſentiments with the puerilities of ſelf-love, that all this together was very engaging. He was deſirous of having a handſome miſtreſs, and a good warhorſe; he would view himſelf in the glaſs as he went through the Pruſſian exerciſe. He would beg Beliſa to lend him the *Roſe-coloured Sopha* *, and aſked her if ſhe had read *Folard's Polybius*. He thought it long till ſpring, that he might have an elegant ſuit, in caſe of a peace, or make a campaign if it ſhould be war. This mixture of frivolouſneſs and heroiſm is perhaps the moſt ſeducing of any thing in the eyes of a woman. A confuſed preſage that this pretty little creature, who trifles at the toilette, who careſſes his dear ſelf, who admires his own ſweet perſon, will perhaps in two months time throw himſelf in the face of a battery upon a ſquadron of the enemy, or climb like a grenadier up a mined breach; this preſage gives to the gentilities of a fine gentleman an air of the marvellous, which creates admiration and tenderneſs: but this foppery ſits well on none but young gentlemen of the

* The title of a novel.

army.

army. A piece of advice, by the way, to pretty fellows of every condition.

Beliſa then was ſenſible to the ſimple and airy graces of Lindor. He had conceived a paſſion for her from the firſt viſit. A young page is in haſte to be in love. "My beautiful couſin," ſaid he to her one day, (for ſo he called her on account of their alliance) "I aſk of heaven but "two things; to make my firſt campaigns "againſt the Engliſh, and with you." "You "are a giddy creature," ſaid ſhe, "and I ad- "viſe you to deſire neither one nor the other: "one will happen perhaps but too ſoon, and the "other will never happen at all."—"Never "happen at all! That is very ſtrong, my "ſweet couſin. But I expected this anſwer: "it does not diſcouage me."—"Come, I will "lay you a wager, that before my ſecond "campaign you will give over being cruel. "Now that I have nothing to plead for me "but my age and my figure, you treat me "like a child; but when you ſhall have heard "it ſaid, He was at ſuch an action, his re- "giment charged on ſuch an occaſion, he "diſtinguiſhed himſelf, he took a poſt, he "has run a thouſand riſques; it is then that "your little heart will go pit-a-pat with fear, "with pleaſure, and perhaps with love; who "knows? if I were wounded, for example! "Oh! that is very moving! For my part,

"if I were a woman, I ſhould wiſh that my "lover had been wounded in the wars. I "would kiſs his ſcars, I ſhould have infinite "pleaſure in counting them. My beautiful "couſin, I ſhall ſhow you mine. You will "never be able to hold it."—"Go, you "young fool, do your duty like a gallant "man, and do not ſhock me with preſages "that make me tremble."—"See now if I "have not ſpoke truth? I make you tremble "beforehand. Ah! if the idea alone affects "you, what will the reality? Courage, my "pretty couſin, you may truſt yourſelf to me; "will not you give me ſomething in advance "upon account of the laurels that I am going "to gather?"

The like fooleries paſſed between them every day. Beliſa, who pretended to laugh at them, was not the leſs ſenſibly touched; but that vivacity which made ſo great an impreſſion upon her heart, prevented Lindor from perceiving it himſelf. He was neither knowing enough, nor attentive enough, to obſerve in her the gradations of ſentiment, and to draw his advantages from it. Not that he was not as enterpriſing as politeneſs requires; but a look intimidated him, and the fear of diſpleaſing weighed with him as much as his impatience to be happy. Thus two months paſſed away in ſlight attempts, without any deciſive

ſucceſs.

ſucceſs. However, their mutual love grew more and more animated; and feeble as Beliſa's reſiſtance was, ſhe was tired of it herſelf, when the ſignal for war gave the alarm to their loves.

At this terrible ſignal all their labours are ſuſpended: one flies away without waiting an anſwer to a moſt gallant billet; another fails in an aſſignation that would have crowned all his wiſhes: a total revolution in the whole empire of pleaſures!

Lindor had ſcarce time to take leave of Beliſa. She had now reproached herſelf a hundred times for the cruelties ſhe had not ſhown him. "This poor youth," ſaid ſhe, "loves "me with all his ſoul: nothing can be more "natural or more tender than the expreſſion "of his ſentiments. His figure is a model for "a painter or ſtatuary. He is beautiful as "the day; he is giddy: who is not ſo at his "age? But he has an excellent heart. He "has nothing to do but to amuſe himſelf: he "would find few cruel; yet he ſees only me, "he breathes only for me, and I treat him "with haughtineſs. I know not how he "bears it. I confeſs, that if I were in his "place I ſhould very ſpeedily leave this rigid "Beliſa to ſtupefy herſelf with her virtue; for, "in ſhort, though prudery is good ſometimes, "yet to be always acting the prudiſh part!"

As ſhe was making theſe reflections, the news was brought her that the negociations of peace were broken off, and that the officers had orders to rejoin their corps without delaying one ſingle moment. At this news all her blood froze in her veins. "He is going to depart," cried ſhe, her heart ſtruck and penetrated. "He is going to fight, he is going to die perhaps, and I ſhall not ſee him more!" Lindor arrives in his uniform. "I am come to bid you adieu, my ſweet couſin; I am going; going to face the enemy. Half of my wiſh is fulfilled; and I hope that at my return you will fulfill the other half. I love you dearly, my ſweet couſin! Do you ſometimes remember your little couſin; he will return your faithful ſervant, he gives you his word. If he is ſlain, indeed, he will not return; but in that caſe his ring and watch ſhall be ſent you. You ſee here this little dog in enamel. In it you will retrace my image, my fidelity, my tenderneſs, and you will ſometimes kiſs it." In pronouncing theſe laſt words, he ſmiled tenderly, and his eyes were bedewed with tears. Beliſa, who was no longer able to retain her own, ſaid to him with the moſt ſorrowful air in the world, "You quit us very gaily, Lindor: you ſay you love me; are theſe then the adieus of a lover? I thought it had been

" dreadful to baniſh one's ſelf from what one " loves. But it is not the time now to re- " proach you; come, embrace me." Lindor tranſported, made uſe of this permiſſion even to licentiouſneſs, and Beliſa was not angry. " And when are you to depart?" ſaid ſhe to " him.—" Immediately."—" Immediately? " What! " do not you ſup with me!"---- " Impoſſible."---" I had a thouſand things to " ſay to you."---" Say them quickly then; " my horſes wait."---" You are very cruel " to refuſe me one evening!"---" Ah! my " pretty couſin, I would give you my life; " but my honour is at ſtake: my hours are " counted; I muſt be there to a minute. " Think, if there ſhould be an action and I " not there; I ſhould be undone: your little " couſin would not be worthy of you. Suf- " fer me to deſerve you."

Beliſa embraced him anew, bathing him at the ſame time with her tears. " Go," ſaid ſhe to him, " I ſhould be diſtracted if I drew " upon you the leaſt reproach; your honour " is as dear to me as my own. Be wiſe, ex- " poſe yourſelf only juſt as much as duty re- " quires, and return ſuch as I now ſee you. " You do not give me time to ſay more; but " we will write to each other. Adieu."— " Adieu, my ſweet couſin."—" Adieu, adieu, " my dear boy!"

It is thus that among us gallantry is the ſoul of the point of honour, as the point of honour is the ſoul of our armies. Our women have no need to go before our warriours, in order to ſend them back to the battle; but the contempt with which they treat a poltroon, and the favour they ſhow to men of courage, render their lovers intrepid.

Beliſa paſſed the night in the moſt profound ſorrow: her bed was bathed with her tears. The day following ſhe wrote to Lindor: all that a tender and delicate ſoul could inſpire, of the moſt touching nature, was expreſſed in her letter. O ye, who are ſo ill educated! who is it that teaches you to write ſo well? Does nature take pleaſure to humble us by giving you your revenge?

Lindor full of fire and diſorder in his anſwer expreſſed by turns the two paſſions which prevailed in his ſoul, military ardour and love. Beliſa was ſo impatient that ſhe could enjoy no reſt till ſhe had received this anſwer. Their correſpondence was eſtabliſhed, and continued without interruption for half the campaign; and the laſt letter they wrote was always the warmeſt; the laſt that was expected always the moſt deſired. Lindor, to his misfortune, had a ſuſpicious confident. "You "are bewitched," ſaid this boſom-friend to him, "with this paſſion which you inſpire.

If

"If you did but know the bottom of all this!
"I know women. Will you make one proof
"of her that you love? Write her word that
"you have loſt an eye; I will lay a wager ſhe
"will adviſe thee to take patience, and forget
"her." Lindor, quite certain of his triumph, conſented to make the tryal; and as he knew not how to lie, his friend dictated the letter. Beliſa was diſtracted: the image of Lindor preſented itſelf to her imagination, but with one eye wanting. That large black patch made it impoſſible to know him. "What
"pity!" ſaid ſhe ſighing. "His two eyes
"were ſo fine! Mine met them with ſo much
"pleaſure! Love had painted himſelf there
"with ſo many charms! Yet he is only the
"more intereſting to my affection on this ac-
"count, and I ought to love him the more.
"He muſt be diſconſolate; he trembles, above
"all, leſt he ſhould appear leſs amiable to
"me. Let me write to him, to encourage,
"to comfort him, if it be poſſible." This was the firſt time that Beliſa was ever obliged to ſay to herſelf, *Let me write to him!* Her letter was cold, in ſpite of herſelf: ſhe perceived it, tore it, and writ it over anew. The expreſſions were ſtrong enough; but the turn of them was forced, and the ſtyle laboured. That black patch, inſtead of a fine eye, clouded her imagination, and chilled her conceptions.

ceptions. "Ah! let me flatter myſelf no "longer," ſaid ſhe, tearing her letter a ſecond time: "this poor youth is no longer loved; "an eye loſt turns my ſoul topſy-turvy. I "wanted to play the heroine; I am but a "weak woman: let me not affect ſentiments "above my character. Lindor does not de-"ſerve to be deceived: he reckons upon a "generous and ſenſible ſoul; if I am not ſuffi-"ciently ſo to love him ſtill, I ought to be "enough ſo to undeceive him: his lying un-"der a miſtake will give me pain. I am diſ-"conſolate," writ ſhe to him, "and am "much more to be lamented than you: you "have loſt only a charm, but I am going to "loſe your eſteem, as I have already loſt my "own. I thought myſelf worthy to love you, "and to be beloved by you; I am no longer "ſo: my heart flattered itſelf with being ſu-"periour to events; a ſingle accident has "changed me. Conſole yourſelf, Sir! you "will always have wherewith to pleaſe any "reaſonable woman; and after the humi-"liating confeſſion I have now made you, "you have no longer any occaſion to regret "me."

Lindor was diſtracted on reading this billet. The *Sir* eſpecially appeared to him an atrocious injury. "*Sir*!" cried he. "Ah! "the perfidious woman! Her little couſin,

"*Sir*!

" *Sir!* This *Sir* here is given to the man " with one eye." He went to find out his friend. " I told you ſo, my dear," ſaid the confident. " Now is the moment to take " your revenge; unleſs you had rather wait " the end of the campaign, in order to con- " trive for your heroine the pleaſure of a ſur- " priſe." " No, I will put her to confuſion " from this very day," replied the unfortunate Lindor. He then writ to her, that he was quite tranſported that he had tried her; that *Sir* had ſtill got his two eyes, but that thoſe eyes would never view her more, but as the moſt ungrateful of women. Beliſa was undone, and took from that inſtant the reſolution of renouncing the world, and burying herſelf in the country. " Let us go and ve- " getate," ſaid ſhe; " I am fit only for that."

There was in her neighbourhood a kind of philoſopher in the vigour of his age, who after a full enjoyment of every thing in town, during ſix months, uſed to come to enjoy himſelf the other ſix months in a voluptuous ſolitude. He paid his compliments to Beliſa. " You have," ſaid ſhe to him, " the reputa- " tion of being wiſe; tell me, what is your " plan of life?" " Plan, Madam! I never " had any," replied the Count de P. I do " every thing that can amuſe me, I ſeek after " every thing that I love, and I avoid with " care

"care every thing that makes me dull, or dis-
"pleaſes me."—"Do you live alone? or do
"you ſee company?"—"I ſee our ſhepherd
"ſometimes, to whom I teach morality; I
"converſe with huſbandmen, who are better
"inſtructed than all our *literati*; I give a ball
"to ſome of the prettieſt young villagers in
"the world; I make lotteries for them of
"laces and ribands, and I marry off the moſt
"amorous." "What!" ſaid Beliſa with aſtoniſhment, "do theſe folks know what
"love is?"—"Better than we do, Madam,
"a hundred times better than we do. They
"love like turtles: they give me an appetite
"for it."—"You will confeſs, however,
"that they love without delicacy."----"Alas!
"Madam, delicacy is a refinement of art;
"they have inſtinct from Nature, and that
"inſtinct renders them happy. They talk of
"love in town, but it is practiſed only in the
"country. They have in ſentiment what we
"have in imagination. I have tried, like
"other people, to love and be loved among
"the world; caprice and convenience, or-
"der and diſorder, every thing. A con-
"nexion is nothing more than a rencounter:
"here inclination makes the choice: you will
"ſee in the ſports that I give them, how their
"ſimple and tender hearts ſeek each other
"without knowing it, and attract each other

"by

" by turns." " You give me," ſaid Beliſa, " a picture of the country beyond any ex- " pectation. They ſay theſe people are ſo " much to be lamented!"—" They were ſo, " Madam, ſome years ago; but I have found " out the ſecret of rendering their condition " more agreeable." — " Oh! you ſhall tell " me your ſecret," interrupted Beliſa briſkly; " I want alſo to make uſe of it." —— " It is " your own fault if you do not. This it is: " I have an income of forty thouſand livres " a year; of this I ſpend ten or twelve at " Paris in the two ſeaſons that I paſs there, " eight or ten at my houſe in the country; " and by this management I have twenty " thouſand livres to throw away on the ex- " changes that I make."—" And what are " theſe exchanges you make?"——" I have " lands well cultivated, meadows well wa- " tered, orchards well fenced, and planted with " care."—" What then?"—" What then! " Lucas, Blaiſe, Nicholas, my neighbours and " my good friends, have grounds lying fal- " low, or impoveriſhed; they have not where- " with to cultivate them; I ſwap mine with " them for theirs; and the ſame extent of " land, which hardly maintained them, after " two crops makes them rich. The ground " which was barren under their hands, be- " comes fertile in mine. I chooſe the ſeed for

" it, the plant, the manure, the culture that " ſuits it, and as ſoon as it is in good con- " dition, I bethink me of ſome new exchange. " Theſe are my amuſements." " Charming!" cried Beliſa: " you underſtand agriculture " then?"—" A little, Madam, and I inſtruct " myſelf in it; I confront the theory of the " learned with the experience of the farmers; " I endeavour to correct what I ſee defective " in the ſpeculations of the one, and in the " practice of the other: it is an amuſing " ſtudy."—" Oh! I believe it, and I alſo " would gladly give into it. How then? " You ought to be adored in theſe parts; " theſe poor labourers ought to look upon " you as their father."—" Yes, Madam, we " have a great affection for each other."— " I am very happy, my Lord, that chance " has given me ſuch a neighbour! Let us ſee " each other often, I entreat of you: I want " to purſue your labours, to take up your " method, and become your rival in the hearts " of theſe good people."—" You cannot " have, Madam, any rivals of either ſex " wherever it is your deſire to pleaſe, and " even where it is not."

Such was their firſt interview; and from this moment ſee Beliſa a villager, entirely taken up with agriculture, converſing with farmers, and reading nothing but the *Complete Syſtem*

Syſtem of Agriculture. The count invited her to one of the feaſts which he gave upon holidays, and preſented her to his peaſants as a new benefactreſs, or rather as their ſovereign. She was a witneſs of the love and reſpect they had for him. Sentiments of this kind are catching: they are ſo natural and ſo tender! it is the higheſt of all encomiums, and Beliſa was touched with them even to jealouſy; but how diſtant was this jealouſy from hatred! "It muſt be confeſſed," ſaid ſhe, "that they "have great reaſon to love him. Exclu- "ſive of his good actions, nobody in the "world is more amiable."

From this time the moſt intimate, and, in appearance, the moſt philoſophical connection was eſtabliſhed between them. Their converſation turned only on natural ſtudies, on the means of renovating this old mother Earth, who exhauſts herſelf for the ſake of her children. Botany pointed out to them the plants ſalutary to the flocks and herds, and thoſe that were hurtful to them; mechanics afforded them their powers to raiſe water at a ſmall expence to the top of dry hills, and to ſoften the fatigues of the animals deſtined to labour; natural hiſtory taught them how to calculate the œconomical inconveniences and advantages in the choice of theſe beaſts for labour; practice confirmed or corrected their obſerva-

tions; and they made their experiments in ſmall, in order to render them leſs expenſive. The holiday came round, and their ſports ſuſpended their ſtudies.

Beliſa and the philoſopher mingled in the dances of the villagers. Beliſa perceived with ſurpriſe that not one of them was taken up in admiring her. "You will now," ſaid ſhe to her friend, "ſuſpect me of a very ſtrange piece "of coquetry; but I will not diſſemble with "you. I have been told a hundred times "that I was handſome; I have likewiſe, "much beyond theſe peaſants, the advantage "of dreſs; yet I do not ſee, in the eyes of "the young country-fellows, any traces of "emotion at the ſight of me. They think "only of their companions; they have no "ſouls but for them." "Nothing is more na-"tural, Madam," ſaid the count. "Deſire "never comes without ſome ray of hope; "and theſe poor people find you no otherwiſe "beautiful, than as they do the ſtars and "the flowers." "You ſurpriſe me," ſaid Beliſa: "is it hope that renders us ſenſible?" —"No: but it directs our ſenſibility."— "We love not then but with the hope of plea-"ſing?"—"No truly, Madam; and but "for that, who is there that could not help "loving you?" "A philoſopher then has "gallantry?" replied Beliſa, with a ſmile."—

"I am

"I am right, Madam, and yet am no phi-
"loſopher; but if I deſerved that name, I
"ſhould only be the more ſenſible. A true
"philoſopher is a man, and glories in being
"ſo. Wiſdom does not contradict Nature,
"but when Nature is in the wrong." Beliſa bluſhed, the count was confounded, and they were for ſome time, with their eyes fixed on the ground, without daring to break ſilence. The count endeavoured to renew the converſation on the beauties of the country; but their diſcourſe was confuſed, broken, and without continuation: they no longer knew what they ſaid, and ſtill leſs what they were going to ſay. They parted at laſt, ſhe thoughtful, and he loſt; and both afraid that they had ſaid too much.

The youth of the neighbouring villages aſſembled the next day, in order to give them a feaſt: its ſprightlineſs compoſed all its ornament. Beliſa was tranſported at it; but the cataſtrophe ſurpriſed her. The maſter of the feaſt had made ſongs in praiſe of her and the count, and the couplets cloſed with ſaying, that Beliſa was the elm, and the count the ivy. The count knew not whether he ſhould ſilence them, or take the matter in jeſt; but Beliſa was offended at it. "I aſk pardon for them, "Madam," ſaid the count to her, as he re-conducted her home, "theſe good people ſpeak

" what they think, and know no better. I " ſhould have put them to ſilence, but that " I had not the courage to make them un- " happy." Beliſa made him no anſwer, and he retired overwhelmed with ſorrow for the impreſſion this innocent ſportfulneſs had made on her.

" What an unhappy creature am I!" ſaid Beliſa, after the count's departure. " There " is yet a man that I am going to love. It " is ſo viſible that theſe peaſants obſerve it. " It will be, as before, a ſlight fire, a ſpar- " kle. No: I will ſee him no more: it " is ſhameful to be deſirous of inſpiring a " paſſion, when we are not ſuſceptible of it " ourſelves. The count would deliver him- " ſelf up to me without reſerve, and with " the greateſt confidence: I ſhould make a " very reſpectable man unhappy, if I were " to break off with him." The next day he ſent to know if ſhe was to be ſeen.—" What " part is now to be taken? If I refuſe him " to-day, I muſt ſee him to morrow; if I " perſiſt in not ſeeing him more, what will " he think of this change? What has he done " that can have diſpleaſed me? Shall I leave " him to think that I miſtruſt him or myſelf? " After all, what if he ſhould aſſure me that " he loves me? And if he ſhould love, am " I obliged to love him? I will make him " hear reaſon, I will give him a ſketch of my " character,

" character, he will eſteem me the more for " it: I muſt ſee him." The count comes.

" I am going to ſurpriſe you," ſaid ſhe to him; " I have been on the point of breaking " with you."—" With me, Madam! and " why? What is my crime?"—" Being ami- " able and dangerous, I declare to you that " I came here in queſt of repoſe; that I fear " nothing ſo much as love; that I am not " made for a ſolid engagement; that I have a " ſoul the lighteſt, the moſt inconſtant that " ever was; that I deſpiſe tranſitory likings; " and that I have not a ſufficient fund of ſen- " ſibility to entertain a durable paſſion. This " is my character: I give you warning of " it. I can anſwer for myſelf with reſpect to " friendſhip; but as to love, you muſt not " depend on me; and that I may have no " cauſe to reproach myſelf, I would abſolutely " neither inſpire it, nor be inſpired with it " myſelf." " Your ſincerity encourages " mine," replied the count, " you are now " going to know me in my turn. I have " conceived for you, without the leaſt ſuſpi- " cion or intention, a love the moſt tender " and moſt violent: it is the happieſt thing " that could have happened to me, and I re- " ſign myſelf up to it with all my heart. Say " what you pleaſe to me. You think your- " ſelf light and inconſtant; nothing in it. I

" think

" think I know better than yourſelf the cha-
" racter of your ſoul." —" No, Sir, I have
" tried myſelf, and now you ſhall judge."
She told him the ſtory of the preſident, and
that of the young page. " You loved them,
" Madam, you loved them: you diſcourage
" yourſelf without cauſe. Your anger againſt
" the preſident was without conſequence. The
" firſt emotion is always for the dog, but the
" ſecond for the lover; ſo Nature has ordered
" it. As to your cooling of your love to-
" wards the page, that would not have been
" more durable. An eye leſs always produces
" this effect; but by degrees we become ac-
" cuſtomed to it. As to the duration of a
" paſſion, I muſt be ingenuous with you.
" What a madman is he who requires impoſ-
" ſibilities! I deſire ardently to pleaſe you; I
" ſhall make it my happineſs: but if your in-
" clination for me ſhould happen to grow
" faint, it would be a misfortune, but no
" crime. What! becauſe there is no plea-
" ſure in life without its alloy, muſt we deprive
" ourſelves of every thing, renounce every
" thing? No, Madam, we muſt make choice
" of what there is good, and pardon both in
" ourſelves, and in others, what is not quite ſo
" well, or what is really bad. We lead here
" an eaſy, quiet life; love alone is wanting
" to embelliſh it; let us make the experiment.

" If

" If it ſhould go, friendſhip ſtill remains, and " as vanity has no ſhare in it, the friendſhip " that ſurvives love is the ſweeter, the more " intimate and more tender." —" Really," " Sir," ſaid ſhe, " this is ſtrange philoſophy." —" Simple and natural, Madam! I could " make romances as well as another; but life " is not a romance: our principles, as well " as our ſentiments, ought to be founded " in nature. Nothing is eaſier than to ima- " gine prodigies in love? but all thoſe he- " roes exiſt only in the brains of authors: " they ſay what they pleaſe; let us do what " we can. It is a misfortune, without doubt, " to ceaſe to pleaſe; it is a greater to ceaſe " to love; but the height of miſery is to paſs " one's life in fear and ſelf-conſtraint. Con- " fide in yourſelf, Madam, and deign to con- " fide in me. It is cruel enough not to be " able to love always, without dooming one's " ſelf never to love at all. Let us imitate " our villagers: they do not examine whe- " ther they ſhall love long; it is ſufficient for " them, to feel that they love. I ſurpriſe " you? You have been brought up in the " region of chimeras. Believe me, you have " a good diſpoſition: return to the truth, ſuf- " fer yourſelf to be guided by Nature: ſhe will " conduct you much better than art, which " loſes itſelf in the void, and which reduces

" ſentiment

" ſentiment to nothing by means of analyſing " it."

If Beliſa was not perſuaded, ſhe was much leſs confirmed in her firſt reſolution; and from the moment that reaſon wavers, it is eaſy to overturn it. Beliſa's ſubmitted without difficulty, and never did mutual love render two hearts more happy! Reſigned with the utmoſt freedom one to the other, they forgot the world; they forgot themſelves. All the faculties of their ſouls united in one, formed a mere vortex of fire, of which love was the centre, and pleaſure the fuel.

This firſt ardour abated, and Beliſa was alarmed; but the count confirmed her. They return to their rural amuſements. Beliſa found that nature was embelliſhed; that the heavens were more ſerene, and the country more delightful; the ſports of the villagers pleaſed her more than before: they recalled a delicious remembrance. Their labours became more intereſting. " My lover," ſaid ſhe to herſelf, " is the god who encourages them: " his humanity, his generoſity, are as rivulets " which fertiliſe theſe fields." She loved to converſe with the huſbandmen on the benefits ſhowered upon them by this mortal, whom they called their father. Love brought home to herſelf all the good they ſaid of him. Thus ſhe paſſed the whole ſummer in

in loving, in admiring him, in ſeeing him make others happy, and in making herſelf happy alſo.

Beliſa had propoſed to the count to paſs the winter out of town, and he had anſwered her with a ſmile, " With all my heart." But as ſoon as the country began to grow bare, that walking was impracticable, that the days became rainy, the mornings cold, and the evenings long, Beliſa perceived with bitterneſs, that wearineſs took poſſeſſion of her ſoul, and that ſhe wanted again to ſee Paris. She confeſſed it to her lover with her uſual frankneſs. " I told you ſo before-hand; you would " not believe me: the event but too well juſ- " tifies the ill opinion I had of myſelf." —— " What then is the event?——" Ah! my " dear count, ſince I muſt tell you, I grow " tired: I love you no longer."——" You " grow tired, that is very poſſible," replied the count to her, with a ſmile; " but you do " not love me the leſs: it is the country that " you love no longer."—" Alas! Sir, why " do you flatter me? All places, all ſeaſons, " are agreeable with thoſe we love."—" Yes, " in romances, I have told you ſo already, but " not in nature." " It is in vain for you to " ſay ſo," inſiſted Beliſa; I know full well, " that for two months ago I could have been " happy with you in a deſert."—" Without " doubt,

" doubt, Madam, ſuch is the intoxication of " a growing paſſion; but this firſt flame laſts " only for a time. Love made happy calms " and moderates itſelf. The ſoul, from that " inſtant, leſs agitated, begins to become ſen- " ſible to impreſſions from without: we are " no longer alone in the world: we begin to " feel the neceſſity of diſſipation and amuſe- " ment."—" Ah! Sir, to what do you re- " duce love?"—" To truth, my dear Beliſa." —" To nothing, my dear count, to nothing. " You ceaſe to be my only happineſs, I have " therefore ceaſed to love you."—" No, my " ſoul's idol, no, I have not loſt your heart, " and I ſhall be always dear to you."—" Al- " ways dear! yes, to be ſure; but how?"— " As I would wiſh to be."—" Alas! I per- " ceive my own injuſtice too clearly to con- " ceal it from myſelf."——" No, Madam, " you are not unjuſt. You love me ſuffi- " ciently: I am content, and would not be " loved more. Will you be more difficult " than I?"—" Yes, Sir, I ſhall never for- " give myſelf the having been able to grow " tired of the moſt amiable man in the world." —" And I, Madam, and I, who have no- " thing to boaſt of, am tired alſo at times of " the moſt adorable of all women, and I for- " give myſelf for it."—" What! Sir, are " you ever tired of me?" — " Even of you.

" Never-

"Nevertheleſs, I love you more than my life. "Are you now ſatisfied?" — "Come, Sir, "let us return to Paris!" — "Yes, Ma- "dam, with all my heart; but remember, "that the month of May ſhall find us in the "country again."—"I don't believe it."— "I aſſure you it will, and more fond than "ever."

When Beliſa returned to town, ſhe began to give herſelf up to all the winter-diverſions with a paſſion that ſhe thought ſhe could never ſate. The count on his ſide abandoned himſelf to the torment of company, but with leſs avidity. By degrees Beliſa's ardour abated. The ſuppers appeared long to her: ſhe grew tired at the play. The count took care to ſee her ſeldom; his viſits were ſhort, and he choſe thoſe hours when ſhe was ſurrounded by a multitude of adorers: ſhe aſked him one day, in a very low voice, "What do you think "of Paris?" — "Every thing amuſes, no- "thing attaches me." — "Why do not you "come and ſup with me?" — "You have "ſeen me ſo often, Madam! I am diſcreet; "the world has its turn, and I ſhall have "mine."—"You are ſtill perſuaded, then, "that I love you?"—"I never talk of love "in town. What think you, Madam, of the "new opera?" purſued he aloud, and the converſation became general.

Beliſa was always comparing the count with all ſhe ſaw moſt advantageous, and the compariſon always turned out in his favour. "No "one," ſaid ſhe, "has that candour, that "ſimplicity, that evenneſs of character; no "one has that goodneſs of ſoul and elevation "of ſentiment. When I recollect our conver- "ſation, all our young people ſeem to me "nothing more than well-taught parrots. He "may well doubt that one can ceaſe to love "him after having known him; but no; it "is not the good opinion he has of himſelf, "it is the good opinion he has of me, that "gives him this confidence. How happy "ſhould I be were it well founded!"

Such were Beliſa's reflexions; and the more ſhe perceived her inclination for him revive, the more ſhe was at eaſe with herſelf. In ſhort, the deſire of ſeeing him again became ſo ſtrong, that ſhe could not reſiſt that of writing to him. He repaired to her; and accoſting her with a ſmile, "What, Madam," ſaid he, "a *téte-à-téte!* I ſhall create a thou- "ſand jealouſies." "Nobody, Sir," ſaid Beliſa, "has a right to be ſo: and you know "that I have only friends: but you, are not "you afraid of diſturbing ſome new con- "queſt?" "I never made but one in my "life," replied the count: ſhe expects me in "the country, and I ſhall go this ſpring to "ſee

"ſee her."—"She would be to be pitied if "ſhe were in town: you are ſo taken up "there, that ſhe would run the hazard of "being neglected." —"She would amuſe "herſelf, Madam, and think nothing of me." —"No more of this beating about the "buſh," reſumed ſhe: "why do I ſee you "ſo ſeldom, and for ſo ſhort a time?"—"To "let you enjoy at full liberty all the pleaſures "of your age." —"You can never give me "too much of your company, Sir; my houſe "is yours; look upon it as ſuch, it will flat-"ter me: I requeſt it, and I have acquired "a right to exact it."—"No, Madam, ex-"act nothing; I ſhould deſpair if I diſpleaſed "you: but permit me not to ſee you again "till the return of ſummer." This obſtina-cy piqued her greatly. "Go, Sir," ſaid ſhe to him, with anger, "go ſeek pleaſures in "which I have no part. I have merited your "inconſtancy." From that day ſhe had not one moment's eaſe: ſhe informed herſelf of all his proceedings: ſhe ſought and followed him with her eyes in the public walks and at the theatres: the women whom he ſaw be-came odious to her; ſhe never ceaſed queſti-oning his friends. The winter appeared into-lerably long. Though it was yet but the beginning of March, ſome fine days happen-ing, "I muſt," ſaid ſhe, "confound him,

" and juſtify myſelf. I have been wrong hi-
" therto, he has that advantage over me; but
" to-morrow he ſhall have it no longer." She ſent to requeſt him to come to her; every thing was ready for their departure. The count arrives. " Give me your hand," ſaid Beliſa, " to help me into my coach." " Where are " we going then?" ſaid he.—" To grow " tired of ourſelves in the country." The count was tranſported with joy at theſe words. Beliſa, at the movement of the hand that ſupported her, perceived the ecſtaſy and emotion herſelf had given birth to. " O my dear " count!" ſaid ſhe to him, preſſing that hand which trembled beneath hers, " what do I not " owe you? You have taught me to love; " you have convinced me, that I was capable " of it; and in clearing up my doubts, with " reſpect to my own ſentiments, you have " done me the moſt pleaſing violence: you " have forced me to think well of myſelf, and " to believe myſelf worthy of you. My love " is ſatisfied. I have no longer any SCRU-" PLE, and I am happy."

THE FOUR PHIALS:

OR,

The Adventures of ALCIDONIS of MEGARA.

I AM ſorry, that we have not *Fairyiſm*. It was a ſource of innocent pleaſures to lively imaginations, and the moſt ſenſible manner of dreaming agreeably. The eaſtern climates were formerly inhabited by Genii and Fairies. The Greeks looked on them as intelligent being, which were mediators between men and Gods: ſuch was the familiar *Dæmon* of Socrates; ſuch was the Fairy that protected Alcidonis, as you ſhall ſee by the following narration.

The Fairy Galante had taken a friendſhip for Alcidonis, even before he was born. At his birth ſhe preſided, and beſtowed on him the gift of pleaſing, without any abſolute determined propenſity to love. His youth diſplayed the talents and graces that he had received as his lot.

He had paſſed his fifteenth year, when his father, one of the richeſt and moſt honourable citizens of Megara, on his ſending him to Athens to perform his exerciſes there, ſaid to him, embracing him, "My dear ſon, you are "going to mix in the world among a number "of giddy young fellows, who launch out into "the moſt outrageous abuſe of women. Ne-"ver believe them. Thoſe fellows affect to "deſpiſe them, only becauſe they have not "been able to render them deſpicable. For my "own part, to begin with your mother, my "virtuous wife, I have found in the fair ſex, "that delicacy of ſentiment, candour, truth, "of which few men are capable. Do like me; "chooſe an honeſt wife, of an equal temper, "ſolid character, and a ſociable, and not au-"ſtere, virtue. There are women of this "ſtamp every where. My conſent ſhall fol-"low your choice: I am a good father, and "deſire nothing but your happineſs." Alcidonis, full of theſe leſſons, arrives at Athens. His firſt viſit was to Seliana, to whom he had recommendations. Seliana in her youth had been handſome and agreeable: ſhe was ſtill agreeable, but began to be no longer handſome. After the firſt compliments, "What is your "buſineſs here?" ſaid an old captain to him, who was huſband to Seliana, and an old friend of his father. "A fine thing indeed, at your "age,

" age, to bury one's ſelf among the women!
" The Circus, the Piræeus, theſe are the
" ſchools for you, and not that trifling circle
" which they call the *beau monde*. I am mad
" when I ſee a young fellow come to Athens;
" they ought to go to Sparta."

Alcidonis was diſconcerted by ſo warm an apoſtrophe; but Seliana took his part warmly. " That is like you," ſaid ſhe to her huſband: " Sparta, the Circus, the Piræeus! well! " and what do they learn, prithee now, in " theſe famous ſchools?" " To get money " and fight," replied the huſband roughly. —" To get money! very noble indeed! To " fight! very agreeable! The firſt is un- " worthy the ambition of a gallant man, and " the ſecond is learnt but too ſoon."—" Not " ſo ſoon, Madam, not ſo very ſoon as you " imagine. I am afraid that after paſſing his " youth at the toilette, a man would make " neither a good officer, nor a good ſoldier."— " And for my part, there is nothing more hi- " deous and diſagreeable in my eyes, than a " man who has never learnt any thing but to " fight. One would imagine, that you were " here only to cut one another's throats! Peace " has its talents and its virtues, as well as war. " Men are not always at the head of a troop." —" So much the worſe! By all the Gods, " ſo much the worſe! I wiſh it were forbid,

" even

" even in time of peace, to quit the colours " on pain of death."—" How, Sir! would " not you allow us ſo much as one man?"— " You ſhould have men enough, Madam: you " ſhould have all the refuſe. There are num- " bers quite uſeleſs to the ſtate!"—" Very " fine, indeed! you would reduce us then to " the refuſe of the commonwealth. The la- " dies are infinitely obliged to you."—" I " acquit them of all obligations."—" No, Sir, " we are citizens, and we generouſly give up " to the ſtate all thoſe figures that diſpleaſe " us, all faces that fright one, all thoſe fierce " characters that delight in nothing but mur- " der, and are good for nothing elſe."— " And you reſerve to yourſelves the handſome " men who love to live; is it not ſo?—" Cer- " tainy."—" That is right; and the Areo- " pagus, to be ſure, will take care to paſs it " into a decree, to pleaſe you. Pardon me, " Sir, my wife is a fool. I leave you; for " I can no longer hold it. Oh Hercules! Ma- " dam, muſt I be your huſband! Theſe things " happen only to me." At theſe words he went out, ſtamping with his feet, and clapt the door roughly after him.

" This is a ſingular manner of behaving," ſaid Alcidonis, " have you often the like ſcenes." " Yes, Sir, replied ſhe coldly, " every time " I have company."—" And when you are " alone?"

" alone ?" — " He chides, but with a tone " ſomewhat lower."—" And how came you " to marry him ?"—" As all the world mar- " ry, for convenience and intereſt. As to any " thing elſe, he is the beſt man in the world. " When I am weary of him, I contradict " him ; he grows impatient, and walks off: " then I do what I pleaſe. I adviſe you to " ſhow him reſpect. His friendſhip is not to " be neglected, and may be of uſe to you. " Do you bring recommendations to many " people here ?"—" To my father's particu- " lar friends ; but the number of them is not " great."—" So much the better, we ſhall " ſee each other the oftener. I wiſh it for " your own ſake, for on entering into a new " world, the wiſeſt have need of a guide."-- " Will you, Madam, condeſcend to be mine ?" —" Either I or my huſband ; you ſhall take " your choice."——" My choice is made." Thus paſſed their firſt interview.

When the huſband returned, " You are a " ſtrange man," ſaid Seliana to him, your " behaviour has frighted away this young " man." — " Whom you wanted to render " familiar ?"——" I underſtand you, Sir ; " henceforth I ſhall order my door to be ſhut " againſt him."—" How ! no Madam, I am " not jealous. It would be beginning a little " too late. I was not jealous in the bloom

" of

" of your youth, and I ſhall hardly be ſo now " you are grown older."—" Theſe are gal- " lantries; but I am accuſtomed to them. " Remember, however, that you owe a viſit " to this ſon of your old friend."—" I ſhall " ſee him, Madam: I know life, and you " may truſt to my behaviour."

The day after, at his entrance into Alcidonis's lodging, he reſumed the converſation of the night before. " Well," ſaid he to him, " are you going to give into the effeminate " manners of the Athenian youth? My wife " has diſpoſed you for it, no doubt. Take " care; not of her, for her time is paſt, thank " Heaven; but take care of the reſt of her " ſex. They are moſt dangerous ſyrens. No " ſafety in any dealings with them. They take " you, deceive you, and quit you without " ſhame. One would think, on ſeeing them " amuſing themſelves with the men, that we " were made only for their play-things." " If " it be ſo," ſaid Alcidonis, " the women of " Athens are not like thoſe of Megara!"— " At Megara, it is the very ſame as here. " You are like your old father. The good " man would ſwear only by his chaſte better " half. It was out of complaiſance to him, " that ſhe dreſſed and ſaw company; out of " piety, that ſhe ſhut herſelf up with a young " prieſt of Minerva; by way of retirement,

" that

" that ſhe went to paſs the evenings at a lit-
" tle houſe which he had fitted up for him-
" ſelf: he reſted upon her virtue with the
" moſt abſolute confidence in the world." —
" He had reaſon, no doubt; and I beg you
" to reſpect my mother's memory." ——
" Your mother! your mother was a wo-
" man. Would you have had ſome being
" made on purpoſe? I have ſeen enough of
" them; but I know none but my termagant
" that is truly faithful; and what is ſtill
" more, it is I have made her ſo. I have
" rendered her virtuous in ſpite of her teeth;
" but I have not been able to root out of her
" thoſe ſeeds of coquetry which nature or ex-
" ample plants in them almoſt at their birth.
" I would lay a wager that ſhe is even capa-
" ble of attempting to ſeduce you, for the
" ſake of the pleaſure of laughing at you.
" You would not be the firſt whom ſhe has
" reduced to deſpair. She uſed to amuſe
" herſelf formerly at this pretty little di-
" verſion, and then ſhe has given me ac-
" counts of it, at which ſhe laughed, as if
" ſhe had been mad. By good luck ſhe
" grows older, and the danger is no longer
" ſo great."

Alcidonis's thoughts were taken up a conſi-
derable part of the night with what he had
heard. " The women here," ſaid he, " are
" very

" very terrible then!" And he goes to ſleep with a reſolution of avoiding them.

The Fairy Galante appeared to him in a dream, and ſaid to him, " Nothing is ſo much " like man as woman. All the good, all the " evil, that is ſaid of them, is true in parti- " cular, but falſe in general. One ſhould nei- " ther truſt in every one, nor diſtruſt every " one. Live with the women, but give your- " ſelf up to them only at proper times. I " have not given you a determined character, " that you may be more flexible to theirs. A " preciſe man is an unſociable man. You will " be charming, if it may be ſaid of you, *We* " *do whatever we pleaſe with him.* But it is not " enough to pleaſe; one muſt know likewiſe " how to love, and to love neither too much " nor too little. There are three ſorts of " love, paſſion, liking, and fancy. All the " art of being happy conſiſts in the proper diſ- " poſition of theſe three ſhades. For this " purpoſe, here are four phials, of which you " alone ſhall make uſe. They are different " in their virtues, as well as in their colours. " You are to drink out of the purple phial, in " order to be in love to diſtraction; out of " the roſe-coloured one, to ſkim the ſurface " of ſentiment and pleaſure; out of the blue " one, to taſte of it without uneaſineſs and in- " toxication; and out of the white one, to

" return

" return to your own natural ſtate." At theſe words the fairy's image vaniſhed like a vapour.

Alcidonis, inchanted with ſuch an agreeable dream, awakes. But how ſurpriſed was he to find really the four phials at hand! "Now," ſaid he, "I ſhall drink from them "at leiſure." He gets up full of gratitude towards the fairy, and the ſame day reviſits Seliana. She was alone. "You have "ſeen my huſband?" ſays ſhe. "Has not he "been declaiming againſt gallantry?" —— "Very violently."——"He has told you a "thouſand frightful ſtories of the women?" —"He has."—"I hope he has excepted me." ——"He has even excepted you only in the "article of fidelity."——"Good man!"—— "He is perſuaded that you are faithful to "him; but he pretends that you are only "the more dangerous on the account, and "that you divert yourſelf moſt cruelly with "thoſe who have the misfortune to fall in "love with you."—"Ah! ſee there how he "abuſes me! He would richly deſerve.... "But hold, I muſt have ſome reſpect to my-"ſelf."—"Your virtue, he ſays, is of his "own forming; and it is he that has made "you honeſt."—"He!" —"He himſelf; "and in ſpite of your teeth"—"In ſpite of "my teeth! That is ſaying a great deal. I "will let him ſee ſoon whether he can make

" me virtuous in ſpite of my teeth!——" I " muſt own, that in your place. . ."——" And " I ſhould be glad too to revenge the inſult he " has done my mother."——" Your mother!" —— " He has dared to tell me that my father " was a fool, and there is no man but him- " ſelf in the world who is not ſo."——" Poor " man! he has great reaſon to brag truly! " But, once more, I muſt reſpect myſelf. " No, Sir, I am no coquette; and ſince he " obliges me to juſtify myſelf, I have a heart " as tender, and more tender, than another." ——" And what do you do with that heart?"— " Alas, I do nothing at all with it; but you " may eaſily believe that it is not for his " ſweet looks that I keep it. I am prudent " for my own eaſe, that I may not expoſe " myſelf to the caprice, the inconſtancy, and " the ingratitude of men, I feel that if I " loved, I ſhould love paſſionately, and I " ſhould wiſh to be loved in the ſame man- " ner."——" Ah! and ſo you ſhall."——" I " dare not flatter myſelf with that: nothing " is weaker, vainer, and more inconſtant, " than the love of your ſex. They have their " likings, their fancies; but the paſſion of " love, that intoxication which creates all its " charms, and is its only excuſe, they are " quite unacquainted with."——" For my part, " Madam, I know very well how that love

" is

" is to be got, which you deſerve; and if I " were ſure of a return, I ſhould take a good " doſe of it!" Seliana ſmiled at Alcidonis's ſimplicity, (for the fairy had given him towards her that unaffected air, that ingenuous manner, which coquettes love ſo greatly). " No," ſaid ſhe to him, " people are not inflamed all " at once thus; and how can we poſſibly be " in love? We do not know each other yet." —" At your own time then, Madam; I am " not in a hurry. To morrow we ſhall know " each other better."——" I ſhall ſee you to- " morrow then!"—" Yes, Madam."—" Af- " ter dinner, do you hear? For I would ſpare " you the diſagreeable circumſtance of finding " my huſband at home. We ſhall be alone, " we ſhall be at liberty, and I ſhall talk rea- " ſon to you."

Alcidonis failed not to repair to the place of rendezvous, with his phials in his pocket. Seliana received him in the moſt tempting diſhabille. " See there," ſaid Alcidonis, on ſeeing her, " the privilege of beauty: the leſs " ornament, the more charms." Seliana pretended to bluſh. " Do you know," ſaid ſhe to him, " that this pretended ingenuouſneſs " of yours makes you dangerous? One might " let one's ſelf be taken by it, and we ſhould " be deceived."—" I, Madam, deceive you! " I never deceived any body."—" And you

" would begin with me?"—" No, I ſwear."
—" Why then this flattering diſcourſe, thoſe
" tender looks?"—" You are handſome; I
" have eyes; I ſpeak what I ſee; there is no
" flattery in that."—" Indeed your tran-
" quillity makes it evident that you have no
" deſign to ſeduce me."—" Ah! ah! if you
" would but have it ſo, that tranquillity
" ſhould ſoon vaniſh."—" Oh! without doubt;
" and to be all on fire, you wait only for my
" conſent, is it not ſo?"—" Nothing truer;
" you need only ſay the word."—" Indeed
" you are very fine, with that air of yours,
" ſo cold and ſo determined." —" It is be-
" cauſe I am certain of what I do."—" What
" if I ſhould oblige you to ſhow ſome deſire
" of being loved?" —" You may do it to
" any degree you pleaſe; I give you my word
" of it."—" I ſee plainly, Alcidonis, that
" you don't know what you promiſe, and
" how much I might demand."—" Demand,
" Madam, demand; my heart defies you.
" I will love you as much as you pleaſe."—
" You will love me then, if I pleaſe, to
" diſtraction?"—" To diſtraction let it be;
" it will coſt me nothing more."—" His
" ſimplicity charms me. Very well then,
" yes, it is my will that you love me, and
" love me greatly." — " Paſſionately?" —
" Paſſionately."—" And you will love me in

" like

"like manner?"—"I believe ſo."—"That "is not enough." — "I am ſure of it." — "That is ſufficient, and you ſhall ſee fine "ſport." —"Where are you going then?" —"Yours; I aſk but one minute."

The credulous Alcidonis, having retired into a corner, drank up the elixir in the purple phial, to the very laſt drop. He appears again, his eyes inflamed, his heart beating, and his voice almoſt extinct. The more foolery, the more gallantry: his language was rapid, broken, full of matter and warmth. Words were not ſufficient to declare his ſentiments. Inarticulate accents ſupplied the place of ſpeech; a vehement geſture, an impetuous action redoubled their energy. This pathetic eloquence put Seliana quite beſide herſelf. She is moved, agitated, loſt: ſhe hardly knows him again, and can ſcarce conceive ſo wonderful a change. She would ſeem to doubt, to fear, to heſitate ſtill: vain efforts! Her heart relents, her eyes brighten, her reaſon fails; and one would have thought, the very moment after, that ſhe alſo had drank of the ſame phial.

Two months paſſed away in tranſports which they found it difficult to confine within any bounds. The huſband was perpetually rallying Alcidonis on his aſſiduities to his wife. "Poor dupe," ſaid he to him, "you would

" not believe me. You are caught; I am " glad of it. Throw yourſelf away in dang- " ling after her: time well employed!" Alcidonis took the beſt revenge he could for this inſulting irony. But his paſſion was no longer ſeconded: Seliana's grew every day weaker and weaker. Seliana ſufficed him; but he was no longer able to ſuffice Seliana. She wanted diſſipation, diverſion, and to ſee again the world, which ſhe had forgot. Alcidonis took umbrage at it. He perceived with a deep ſorrow that ſhe amuſed herſelf with every thing, while he was taken up with nothing but her. He became penſive, uneaſy, and jealous; he went ſo far, that ſhe was offended at it, and reſolved to diſmiſs him.

" It is true," ſaid ſhe to him, " I have loved " you; I was mad. I am now come to my " ſenſes again; imitate me. We are no where " enjoined to carry on love, even to decay. " Every thing has an end, even love itſelf. " Mine is enfeebled; you have chid me for it. " It is become extinct; you diſtract yourſelf " about it. So much the worſe for you: but " I cannot help it." — " How! perfidious! " ungrateful! perjured woman!"——" As " much as you pleaſe; vent your reproaches, " if that will comfort you."——" Ah! Juſt " Heaven! how I am treated!"—" Like a " child in whom we pardon every thing."—

" Are

" Are theſe, perfidious woman, the oaths " that you have ſworn a hundred times, to " love me to the laſt gaſp? — " Raſh oaths, " which bind us to nothing; mad, whoever " makes them; mad, whoever truſts them. " Would you believe any one who, on ſitting " down to table, ſhould ſwear by all the gods " that he would always have the ſame ſto- " mach?"—" The ſame ſtomach! What an " image! Is this that delicacy of which your " heart prided itſelf ſo much?"—" Another " piece of folly. We diſavow the empire of " the ſenſes, at the very inſtant we are their " ſlaves. I am a woman, I love like a wo- " man, and you ought not to have expected " that Nature ſhould work a miracle in your " favour." Alcidonis, at theſe words, tore his hair with deſpair. " Very fine!" pur- ſued ſhe, " what is that for? Will you be " more amiable, or better beloved, when you " are bald? Alcidonis, liſten to me. I have " ſtill a compaſſionate friendſhip for you." -- " Ah! cruel woman! is it friendſhip, is it " compaſſion that I aſk of you?" — " You " muſt really bring yourſelf to that; I feel " nothing more for you. Which of the two " is to blame, the party who ceaſes to love, " or that which ceaſes to be agreeable? The " queſtion is not yet, nor will ſoon be deter- " mined. In the mean time, truſt me, and

" take

" take your reſolution with courage."—" It " is taken, ungrateful woman, it is taken," ſaid he, withdrawing to drink; and I need not ſay, that he had recourſe to the white phial.

All at once his ſenſes are calm, and his reaſon returns. " In effect," ſaid he, when he returned to Seliana, with an air full of mildneſs and tranquillity, " I was very fooliſh to " be angry. We were lovers, now we are " friends. All this muſt happen in life. Paſſion " is a fever: when it is over, every thing is " ſaid. We are not obliged to ſee one another " any longer than it amuſes, and nothing is " more natural than to change when we are " tired. You have loved me as long as you " were able. It would have been ridiculous " to pique yourſelf on a conſtancy that was " painful! Enjoy, Madam, the right your " beauty gives you of multiplying your con- " queſts. I am too happy in having been of " the number. Each muſt have his turn. I " wiſh you much entertainment."

Seliana was as ſurpriſed as piqued at the coldneſs of his adieus. She wiſhed, indeed, that he ſhould conſole himſelf, but neither ſo ſoon, nor ſo eaſily. So ſudden a change was inconceivable. On reflexion ſhe was perſuaded, that this apparent tranquillity was only a pretended diſguſt; and ſhe failed not to

to tell ſome of her ſhe-friends, that the poor boy was mad with deſpair, that he had put her into a terrible fright, and that ſhe had all the difficulty in the world to prevent him from committing an act of violence on himſelf. The day following, Alcidonis went to ſup at the voluptuous Alcipe's, with ſome of the youngeſt and handſomeſt women in Athens. "All one "to me," ſaid he to himſelf: "the purple "phial is dry; and it would be in vain for "the fairy to repleniſh it, for may I die if I "would taſte a ſingle drop of it." As ſoon as he ſaw all thoſe beauties, "Ah! now let "let us triſle for once: this is the moment "for whim and frolick." He drinks of the roſe-coloured phial, and immediately his eyes and his deſires wander without fixing.

Chance had ſeated him at table next to a fair beauty, with languiſhing looks, and of extreme modeſty and timidity. He was ſenſibly touched; but he had on the other ſide of him a *brunette*, dazzling the beholders with her freſhneſs and vivacity. He had a great mind for the latter, yet was deeply ſmitten with the former; and on further conſideration would have preferred the fair beauty, had it not been for a certain *je ne-ſcai-quoi* which inclined him to the brown. This *je-ne-ſcai-quoi* determined his choice. He ſhowed her all the aſſiduities of a warm gallantry:

lantry: ſhe received them with an air of inattention, and as an homage that was due to her. Alcidonis was piqued at it. Whim, as well as paſſion, is irritated by obſtacles. Excited by the deſire of pleaſing, he formed all the delight of the entertainment. Corinna, his charming *brunette*, ſaw that the ladies envied her her conqueſt. She at length perceived the value of it, and ſome looks of complacency infuſed hope into the heart of her new lover.

The hour of parting now arrived. Corinna riſes, he follows. "You will attend "me then? ſaid ſhe to him, receiving the offer of his hand. "I am ſenſible of all the "ſacrifices you make me." He ſwore that he made her none. "Pardon me: I carry "you away from the handſomeſt women in "Athens; and that is no mean triumph." "I "have only juſt ſeen them: but they appeared "to me pretty well."—"Pretty well! Your "commendations are very ſparing indeed! "Will you only call Cleonida *pretty well?* "Thoſe large eyes, thoſe regular features, "that majeſtic figure..... One would take "her for a goddeſs."—"True, the ſtately "Juno."—"You wicked devil! and Amate, "what d'ye think of her? That air of vo"luptuouſneſs, that attracting negligence, "which ſeems to invite pleaſure."—"Right;

"juſt

" juſt ſo I would paint opportunity neglected."
——" Neglected! a cruel phraſe, I will not
" repeat it; it would paſs into a proverb. I
" hope at leaſt that you will ſhow ſome favour
" to the ingenuous and timid air of Cephiſa.
" That lively complexion, that tender look,
" that mouth which is afraid to ſmile, and
" yet when it ſmiles is ſo beautiful: what ſay
" you to her?"——" That there is nothing
" wanting in all this but a ſoul."——" And
" you would be glad to give her your's?"—
" I confeſs, that but for yourſelf ſhe ſhould
" have had the apple."——" Alas! and what
" would ſhe have done with it? Nothing is
" more cold, more indolent, more inſenſible
" than Cephiſa."—" And therefore ſhe had
" only my firſt glance."—" Yet I caught you,
" when ſupper was almoſt over, with your
" eyes fixed upon her."—" True, I admired
" her as I would a fine model in wax."——
" Right, a fine model if you pleaſe: but the
" general opinion is, that this model ſtands in
" great need of drapery."

While they thus ran over the objects of Corinna's jealouſy, they arrive at her lodgings. " Will you walk up for a moment?" ſaid ſhe to Alcidonis: " it is early; we will have a " little chat." Alcidonis was tranſported. The fairy, who had made him ſo cenſorious with Corinna, knew well what ſhe was doing.

The

The moſt flattering encomium to a handſome woman, is the abuſe of her rivals: and this ſhe had taken well at his hands.

"I long," purſued Corinna, "to know, "in my turn, the good and ill you think of "me."—"The ill! alas, if you have any, have "you given me the time, the liberty of per- "ceiving it? You are ſurrounded with illu- "ſion. That luſtre, that ſparkling vivacity, "would conceal deformity itſelf: I ſhould "have taken it for beauty. I ſee you, I am "dazzled, intoxicated, tranſported: this is "my caſe. 'Tis an infatuation, a madneſs, "whatever you pleaſe; but nothing in the "whole world is truer; and you can make "me, by one ſingle word, the happieſt, or "moſt miſerable of men."——"Madneſs in- "deed!" cried ſhe, ſeeing him at her knees: "you ſee me by chance, you love me, if we "may believe it, and you dare confeſs it to "me! Do you know whether I merit this "opinion of me? Do you know whether I "can make any return to it?"——"No, "Madam, I know nothing. You are perhaps "the moſt cruel of women, the moſt incon- "ſtant, the moſt perfidious. That fine per- "ſon, thoſe charming features, may conceal "an inſenſible ſoul. I fear it, yet I will run "the hazard of it; and though the danger "were as great again, it is not in my power

"to

" to avoid it." — " Ah! I perceive plainly " by theſe ſtrokes the truth of your general " character. It is you, Alcidonis, that are " the moſt dangerous of men, and the per- " ſon whom of all mankind I ſhould moſt " dread to love.—" Why ſo? What have " you heard of me? — " That you are one " who love paſſionately; and a man who " loves paſſionately is an inſupportable crea- " ture: that you abandon yourſelf diſtract- " edly: that you love like a madman, and " want to be loved in the ſame manner. " If we love not as paſſionately as yourſelf, " then nothing but complaints and reproaches. " You become ſulky, uneaſy, and jealous. " There is no knowing how to quit you, and " no poſſibility of abiding with you."—" It " is true, Madam, that I have given into " theſe abſurdities; but I am now thoroughly " come to myſelf. You may take me with " all ſafety: I will ſign my diſcharge before- " hand."——" Do not imagine, Sir, that I " am jeſting with you: what but liberty, " but freedom, forms the charms of love! " Without theſe a lover becomes a huſband, " and indeed it would be no hard matter to " become a widow." — " I underſtand rea- " ſon, my beautiful Corinna, and you may " depend upon me." — " You would give " your word of honour then to a woman,

" who ſhould entertain a weakneſs for you,
" to retire without making a buſtle, as ſoon
" as ſhe ſhould have told you as a friend,
" I have loved you, but I now love you no
" longer ?"—" Certainly : I have learned to
" live, and you need only try me."—" Well,
" I will then ; but remember, that I engage
" myſelf to love you no longer than you ſhall
" be agreeable to me."

Alcidonis ſaid within himſelf, " I ſee well,
" that the white phial will be here very ſer-
" viceable to me." He was miſtaken; he had no need of it : the impreſſion of the roſe-coloured one vaniſhed very ſoon of itſelf. He was yet at Corinna's, and yet the idea of the other beauties he had ſeen at Alcipe's already preſented itſelf to his imagination. " Such a
" one is lively," ſays he, " but that is all ;
" no ſentiment, no delicacy. That other
" changes her lovers, as ſhe does her cloaths.
" To-morrow I ſhould be diſmiſſed, if to-
" morrow any other amuſes her. I ſhould
" have a fine time of it to throw away
" my ſighs on her ! I ſhould have done much
" better to have beſtowed them on that lan-
" guiſhing *fair* beauty, whoſe eyes were raiſed
" towards me in ſo tender, ſo affecting a
" manner. Corinna ſpeaks ill of Cephiſa to
" me ; Cephiſa then muſt have merit. She is
" not very animated ; but what a pleaſure it
" would

" would be to animate her! A woman natu-
" rally lively is ſo to all the world; but ſuch
" a one would be ſo to me alone. Come, let
" me go and ſee her; beſides, I ſhould not
" care to be diſmiſſed. Corinna ſhall know
" that I am not one of thoſe who are to be
" dropped as ſhe pleaſes, and that I know
" how to give a diſmiſſion full as well as
" herſelf."

He ſays to Cephiſa the ſame things that he had ſaid to Corinna, but with more diſcretion. " Is it poſſible?" cried ſhe, without any emotion. " What! you would be unhappy, if " I were not to love you?"—" More unhappy " than I can expreſs."—" I am ſorry for it, for " I don't know how to love."—" Oh! my " beautiful Cephiſa, with that enchanting " ſmile, that tender look, that voice which " goes to the very ſoul, you don't know how " to love!"—" No, indeed."—" But if I " ſhould teach you how?"—" You would do " me great pleaſure, for I am very curious. " But ſo many have attempted it, and not " ne has ſucceeded. My huſband himſelf " would loſe all his labour."—" Your huſ- " band! I believe it: but have you had " lovers?"—" Many, and thoſe ſome of the " handſomeſt and moſt tender."—" And did " you make them happy?"—" No; for they " all complained that I did not love them.

" It was not my fault; I did all in my power. " Do but think on't: I uſed now and then " to take four at a time, in order to en- " deavour, among the number, to love " at leaſt one or two: yet all to no pur- " poſe."

" This," ſaid Alcidonis, " is an inſtance " of ingenuity, of which I have ſeen very " few examples. But let us not be diſcouraged, " my dear child; you will love me."—" Do " you think ſo?"—" I do think ſo: you have " ſenſibility?"—" Yes, at times, here and " there; but it paſſes away in a moment. —" This is certainly a diſeaſe. Have you, " in order for your cure, offered up any ſacri- " fices to Venus?" " My huſband has offered " up a great many; but he always found me " the ſame at his return from the temple."— " And why did he not carry you there your- " ſelf?"—" He took care not to do that: " the prieſt was young, and wanted to initiate " me."—" Initiate you! And do you know " what that ceremony means?"—" Alas, not " I; I know nothing of it." — " Shall I " ſhow you?" reſumed Alcidonis, taking ſome little liberties with her. " Softly, Sir," cried ſhe, " you act as if I loved you; I am not in " love with you yet." — " And how ſhould " you know that, unleſs we make ſome ex- " periments?"—" I have made a thouſand;

" but

" but all that proves nothing. At firſt I think " I love, and then I think I do not. It is " better to wait till it comes; and if it comes, " I will tell you."

Alcidonis, from day to day, made ſome new progreſs on the indolent ſenſibility of Cephiſa; but ſhe was not yet arrived to the pitch that he wanted to bring her to. In order to heat her imagination, he propoſed to meet her at a feaſt which was to be celebrated in honour of Venus. She conſented, on condition that ſhe ſhould not be initiated. The day after, each of them, out of decency, repaired ſeparately to their quarter. The girls and the boys, arrayed like the Graces and the Loves, ſung hymns in honour of the goddeſs, and danced to the ſound of the lyre, beneath the ſhade of a ſacred grove that ſurrounded the temple.

Cephiſa had got there firſt. " Ah!" ſaid ſhe to Alcidonis, " I was looking for you; " I have good news to tell you. The god- " deſs has anticipated our vows: I think I " now begin to love you in good earneſt. " This very night I have ſeen you in my " ſleep. You was preſſing; I was animated." —" Well!"—" Well, I will tell you the " reſt at ſupper." " At ſupper?" replied Alcidonis, with a pre-engaged air, and his eyes fixed on the feaſt: " At ſupper let it be, with

" all my heart. What a beautiful dancing " girl is there! how charmingly that woman " ſings!" " We ſhall be alone, do you hear?" —" Alone! with all my heart. I ſhould be " glad to know who that handſome dancer " is?"--" Alcidonis, you do not hear me!"— " Pardon me, I do hear you; but I am look- " ing out for ſome body who may tell me. " ... Oh! Pamphilus, one word. Tell me, " who is that beautiful dancer? " It is " Chloe," ſays Pamphilus. " I am to ſup " with her."—" With her? this evening?" — " This very evening." — " I ſhould be " glad to make one."—" That cannot be." —" I beſeech you, my dear Pamphilus, by " our friendſhip."—" You do not conſi- " der, Alcidonis," whiſpered the diſordered Cephiſa: " you are to ſup with me; I " told you ſo."—" True, I intended it; " but I have promiſed my friend Pamphilus. " My word is ſacred, and I cannot break it."

He ſaw Chloe, found her adorable, as it s called, for a quarter of an hour, and inſipid the moment after. He ſaw Phillira the ſinger; he was ſmitten with her for an evening: the next day he was tired of her. " Alas! " how fatiguing are whimſies!" ſays he: " every inſtant new deſires, not one of " which ſatisfies my ſoul. It is the tor- " ment of the Danaides. Away, theſe tran-

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"ſitory beams of ſentiment which revive ſo "faſt, and leave me no repoſe: let me drink "oblivion to my follies" He ſaid, and emptied the white phial. He had now none left but the blue; and his happineſs depended on the uſe he ſhould make of it.

Alcidonis had ſtudied philoſophy under Ariſtus the Academician. Ariſtus, when he died, left a young widow, moſt virtuous and beautiful. The diſciple of Ariſtus thought he was bound by every tie, to give his widow the conſolations and relief of friendſhip. Theleſia refuſed them with a modeſty mixed with ſweetneſs and pride. "I have little wealth," ſaid ſhe, "and ſtill leſs deſires. My huſ-"band has left me a moſt valuable inheri-"tance, a reliſh for the golden mean, and "the habit of living upon little." So much prudence united to ſo much beauty deſerved a delicate and laſting attachment. "It is time," ſays Alcidonis, "that I ſhould drink out of "the blue phial."

A gentle and lively heat ſpreads itſelf thro' his veins. It was not an uneaſineſs of fancies; it was not a flight of paſſion; it was a delightful emotion foreboding happineſs. He burns to be Theleſia's. He burns to have henceforth but one lot with her, one life, and one ſoul; and giving way to his impatience, he propoſes to unite himſelf to her.

Theleſia

Theleſia was not inſenſible to this mark of love and eſteem. "You are generous "enough," ſaid ſhe, "to offer me your "hand. I will deſerve it: I will refuſe it. "I ſhould be unworthy of it, if I accepted "it." It was in vain that he anſwered her, that he had his father's conſent, that he made it criminal in her to refuſe him, that he menaced her with the reproaches ſhe would throw out againſt herſelf, for having made him unhappy; ſhe appeared immoveable.

Theleſia, however, in her retirement, wept without ceaſing. The only ſlave ſhe had left ſaw the grief that conſumed her, but was not able to penetrate the cauſe. Should he attribute it to the death of her huſband? What! lament, without ceaſing, a philoſophical huſband! That was not natural. His miſtreſs often writ to a citizen of Argos; and the anſwers he returned her forced deep ſighs from her. Curioſity or zeal induced the ſlave to open one of Theleſia's letters. It was conceived in theſe terms.

"If you have not a heart of braſs, you "will be touched, My Lord, with the de-"ſpair of an unfortunate woman, who would "give her life for the liberty of her father. "Ariſtus, my huſband, to whom I was not "aſhamed to confeſs that I was born of a "ſlave,

" ſlave, ſpared no pains to reſtore my father " to my wiſhes. He cauſed him to be ſought " after in vain. I learn at laſt that he is in " your power, and I learn it in indigence. " I have valued every thing that I have left. " Alas! I am far from being in the condition " of raiſing what you demand. I have but " one ſingle reſource left; that is, to offer " myſelf in exchange for my father. It is not " juſt that I ſhould be free, while my father " is a ſlave. I am young; he is borne down " by years. You may derive more advantage " from my ſervitude than from his. My " hands will inure themſelves to labour; my " heart is prepared for patience. Were I in- " clined to avail myſelf of the eaſy means " which thoſe of my age have in their power " to ſeduce and intereſt the men, I ſhould not " be reduced to this cruel extremity; but " ſlavery is leſs ſhameful than vice. I make " my choice without heſitation."

The ſlave, ſtruck with admiration and pity, carried this letter to Alcidonis. " Ah! cried he, his heart overcome, and his eyes ſwimming with tears, " here then is the cauſe " of her refuſal! She was born a ſlave! What " ſignifies that? Virtue is the empreſs of the " whole world. Fortune only ſhould be " aſhamed. What piety! what tenderneſs! " You, Theleſia, you in ſlavery! Why " have

" have I not a throne to offer you! I conjure " thee by the Gods," ſaid he to the ſlave, " keep this a ſecret. I go. The tears of " thy miſtreſs ſhall ſoon be wiped away, and " thy zeal ſhall have its reward."

Alcidonis repairs to Argos, and Theleſia's father is ſet free. The unknown ſtranger, who procured him his liberty, gives him wherewith to defray his expences to Athens, and ſays to him at parting, " You are now going to ſee " Theleſia; you owe your liberty to her " tenderneſs and her virtues. It depends upon " her to be happy, and to render you ſo. " And if the ſervice I have juſt now done " you be dear to you, promiſe me to en- " gage this virtuous daughter of your's to con- " ceal her birth and your misfortunes from " the eyes of the man who demands her in " marriage. I know him; he reſpects her; " it would ſhock him to ſee her bluſh. If " your benefactor ever appears before you, " ſuppreſs your gratitude. He would not be " known but by you alone."——" What!" ſaid the old man melting into tears, " ſhall my " daughter never know the hand that has " broken my chains? — " No," replied Al- cidonis, " overwhelm not Theleſia with " this load of humiliation. It is one of thoſe " duties that debaſe the ſoul. Let us leave " to her's, I conjure you, its nobleneſs and

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" freedom." The old man promiſed his deliverer to comply in every thing.

He arrives at Athens. His daughter faints away at the ſight of him. " Oh! my father," ſaid ſhe to him, " what God grants you to " my tears? Has then your maſter's avarice " at length ſuffered itſelf to relent?" " Yes, " my daughter," replied the old man. " I " know that I owe to your tenderneſs my " life, and the happineſs of coming to die in " your arms."

Alcidonis, at his return, came again to preſs Theleſia by all the tenderneſs of love to conſent to their marriage. The old man had not been wanting to exhort his daughter to ſilence on the humbleneſs of their former condition. " No," replied ſhe to him with ſpirit, " it is leſs humiliating to confeſs, than " to be ſilent: whoever ſhall have any con- " cern in knowing me, ſhall learn from my- " ſelf who I am."

" You chuſe then," ſaid ſhe to Alcidonis, " that I ſhould open my ſoul to you? " While I was unhappy, I concealed my " grief within myſelf; but you deſerve to " partake of my joy. Know that my deſtiny " decreed me to be born in ſervitude. They " drew me out of it; but my father ſtill " groaned under it. A propitious deity has " reſtored him to me; he is free; he is here;

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" you ſhall ſee him. However, the blot of " our ſervitude is not to be effaced; and to " confeſs to you who we are, is to declare " irrevocably, that neither your honour, nor " my gratitude, will permit me to liſten to " your offers."

" You do me an injuſtice, Theleſia," ſaid Alcidonis, with an air of tenderneſs mingled with reproach. " Do you think me leſs a " philoſopher, or leſs generous, than Ariſtus? " Did you conceal from him the misfortune " of your birth? No, certainly. Did not he " deſpiſe the injuſtice of fortune and opinion? " I am his diſciple: his precepts are engraved " in my heart. Is it reproachful to follow his " example? Or do you imagine that I have " not virtue enough to imitate him?"—" It " is not virtue," ſaid ſhe to him, ſmiling, " but prudence, that you want. Ariſtus " had time to try himſelf. You are not, like " him, of an age at which we can anſwer " for ourſelves. I ſave you the bitterneſs of " ep entance."

Alcidonis, grieved at her invincible conſtancy, fell at Theleſia's feet, in order to move her by pity. In that moment appears the old man, whom he had delivered from ſlavery. " What do I ſee? Ah! my daughter," cried he, " it is he . . . ." and then all of a ſudden calling to mind Alcidonis's prohibition, he

he ſtopt ſhort, and remained with his eyes fixed on his deliverer, as it were inadvertently letting fall tears. "What! my father," ſaid Theleſia aſtoniſhed, "you know him "then? It is he, ſay you! make an end. "What has he done? Where have you known "him? Alcidonis, you look down! you "bluſh! My father views you with the moſt "melting tenderneſs!—Ah! I underſtand "you both. My father, it is he that redeem-"ed you; it is to him that I owe my father," —"Yes, my daughter, there is my bene-"factor." "Is this," ſaid Alcidonis, embracing the old man, who threw himſelf at his feet, "is this what you promiſed me?" "Pardon "me," ſaid the old man, "my heart was "touched; my daughter has gueſſed my ſecret, "it is not my fault."—"Well then, ſince ſhe "knows all, oblige this cruel daughter not to "drive me to deſpair. It is her hand, it is her "heart, that I aſk as the price of the happi-"neſs I reſtore to her." The old man, ſtruck to the heart, warmly reproached his daughter for a piece of ingratitude of which ſhe was not guilty; and taking her trembling hand put it into that of his deliverer. "It is to your "father that I owe it, that I owe this hand "which you refuſed me," ſaid Alcidonis to her tenderly, and kiſſing her hand. "Con-"ſole yourſelf," replied Theleſia, with a

ſmile, " you owe him only my hand; my " heart ſurrendered of itſelf.

Alcidonis, tranſported, employed the remainder of the day in preparing to ſet out on the morrow for Megara. That night, while he enjoyed a gentle ſlumber, the fairy Galante appeared to him again, and ſaid, " Be happy, " Alcidonis; love without uneaſineſs; poſſeſs " without diſguſt; deſire in order to enjoy; " make others jealous, but never be ſo your- " ſelf. It is not advice that I now give you; " it is your deſtiny that I unfold. You have " drank at the ſpring of perfect happineſs. " I diſtribute with a laviſh hand the purple " and roſe-coloured phials; but the blue bottle " is a gift which I reſerve for my favourites."

LAUSUS and LYDIA.

Lauſus Equúm Domitor, Debellatorque Ferarum,
VIRG. En. vii.

EVERY body is well acquainted with the character of Mezentius king of Tyrrhenia. A bad prince, and good father, cruel and tender alternatively, he had nothing of a tyrant, nothing that indicated violence, if his will met with no obſtruction; but the calmneſs of this haughty ſoul was the repoſe of a lion.

Mezentius had a ſon called Lauſus, renowned for his valour and beauty among the heroes of Auſonia. Lauſus had followed Mezentius in the war againſt the king of Præneſte.—It was with the greateſt joy that his father ſaw him, covered with blood, fight and conquer, by his ſide.—The king of Præneſte, driven from his territories. and ſeeking his ſafety in flight, had left in the hands of the conqueror, a treaſure more precious than his crown, a princeſs of an age, wherein the heart has all the virtues of nature, and when nature has all the charms of innocence and

beauty. Every thing that the Graces in tears poſſeſs, either noble or affecting, was painted in Lydia's countenance. In her grief, courage and dignity, one might diſcover the daughter of kings amidſt the croud of ſlaves. She received the firſt compliments of her enemies without haughtineſs, without acknowledgement, as an homage due to her rank, the noble ſentiments of which were not weakened in her ſoul by ill fortune.

She heard her father named, and at that name lifted up to heaven her fine eyes filled with tears. All hearts were moved. Mezentius himſelf, aſtoniſhed, forgot his pride and his age. Proſperity, which hardens weak ſouls, ſoftens proud hearts, and nothing is more gentle than an hero after gaining a victory.

If the ſavage heart of old Mezentius was not able to reſiſt the charms of his captive, what was the impreſſion on the virtuous ſoul of young Lauſus! He mourned over his exploits; he reproached himſelf with his victory: it coſt Lydia tears. "Let her avenge herſelf," ſaid he, "let her hate me as much as I love "her; I have deſerved it but too much." But an idea ſtill more diſtreſsful preſents itſelf to his imagination: he ſees Mezentius, aſtoniſhed, ſoftened, paſs on a ſudden from rage to clemency. He judged rightly that humanity alone had not effected this revolution; and the fear

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of having his father for a rival completed his confuſion.

In the age of Mezentius jealouſy runs cloſe upon love. The tyrant obſerved with a reſtleſs attention the eyes of Lauſus: he ſaw extinguiſhed in them, all at once, that joy and ardour which ſhone at firſt on the face of the young hero, victorious for the firſt time. He ſaw him diſturbed: he caught ſome looks which it was but too eaſy to underſtand. From that inſtant he conſidered himſelf as betrayed; but nature had her turn, and ſuſpended his rage. A tyrant even in his fury forces himſelf to think that he is juſt; and before he condemned his ſon, Mezentius wanted to convict him.

He began by diſſembling his own paſſion with ſo much art, that the prince looked on his former fears as vain, and conſidered the attentions of love as nothing more than the effects of clemency. At firſt he affected to allow Lydia all the appearances of liberty: but the tyrant's court was full of ſpies and informers, the uſual retinue of men of power, who, not being able to make themſelves beloved, place their greatneſs in rendering themſelves feared.

His ſon was no longer afraid of paying Lydia a reſpectful homage. He mingled with his ſentiments an intereſt ſo delicate and ſo tender, that Lydia very ſoon began to reproach

herſelf for the hatred which ſhe thought ſhe entertained for the blood of her enemy. Lauſus, on his ſide, lamented that he had contributed to Lydia's misfortunes. He took the gods to witneſs that he would do all in his power to repair them. "The king my fa-"ther," ſays he, "is as generous after vic-"tory, as untractable before battle: ſatiſ-fied with victory, he is incapable of oppreſ-"ſion. It is eaſier than ever for the king of "Præneſte to engage him to a peace that ſhall "be glorious to both. That peace will dry "up your tears, beautiful Lydia; but will "it efface the rememberance of their crime "who cauſed you to ſhed them! Why did "I not ſee all my blood flow rather than theſe "tears?"

The replies of Lydia full of modeſty and greatneſs, ſhewed nothing to Lauſus but an eaſy gratitude, and at the ſame time her heart was but too ſenſible of the care that he took to comfort her. She ſometimes bluſhed for having liſtened to him with complaiſance; but her father's intereſts made it a law to her to avail herſelf of ſuch a ſupport.

In the mean time their conferences growing more frequent, became alſo more animated, more intereſting, more intimate; and love made its way inſenſibly through reſpect and

and gratitude, as a flower, which, in order to blow, opens the ſlight texture in which it is enfolded.

Deceived more and more by the feigned tranquillity of Mezentius, the credulous Lauſus flattered himſelf, that he ſhould very ſoon ſee his duty accord with his inclination; and nothing in the world, in his opinion, was eaſier than to reconcile them. The treaty of peace which he had meditated, was reduced to two articles; to reſtore to the king Præneſte, his crown, and his territories; and to make his marriage with the Princeſs the band of union between the two powers. He communicated this project to Lydia. The confidence he put in it, the advantages he ſaw accruing from it, the tranſports of joy which the idea alone inſpired him with, ſurpriſed the lovely captive into a ſmile, mingled with tears. "Generous prince," ſays ſhe to him, "may "heaven fullfill the wiſhes you pour out for "my father! I ſhall not be ſorry that I am "made the pledge of peace, and the price of "gratitude." This touching reply was accompanied with a look ſtill more touching. The tyrant was informed of all. His firſt tranſport would have hurried him to ſacrifice his rival; but this ſon was the only ſupport of his crown, the only barrier between the people and him: the ſame ſtroke would have rendered

dered him completely odious to his ſubjects, and have taken from him the only defender, whom he could oppoſe to the publick hatred. Fear is the ruling paſſion of tyrants. Mezentius reſolves to diſſemble. He orders his ſon to come to him, talks to him with good-humour, and bids him prepare to ſet out the next day for the frontiers of his territories, where he had left his army. The prince endeavoured to conceal the grief which wrung his ſoul, and ſet out without having had time to receive the adieus of Lydia.

The very day of Lauſus' departure, Mezentius had cauſed honourable conditions of peace to be propoſed to the king of Prænesſte, the firſt of which was his marriage with the daughter of the vanquiſhed monarch. That unfortunate monarch heſitated not to conſent, and the ſame ambaſſadour that offered him peace brought back his agreement for an anſwer.

Lauſus had at court a friend, who had been attached to him from his infancy. A remarkable reſemblance to the young prince had been the means of making the fortune of this young man, who was called Phanor: but they reſembled each other ſtill more in their diſpoſition than their figure; the ſame inclinations, the ſame virtues: Lauſus and Phanor ſeemed to have but one ſoul. Lauſus at parting

parting had confided to Phanor his paſſion and his deſpair. The latter was therefore inconſolable on hearing of the marriage of Lydia with Mezentius. He thought it his duty to acquaint the prince with it. The ſituation of the lover at this news cannot be deſcribed; his heart is troubled, his reaſon forſakes him; and in the diſtraction of a blind ſorrow he writes to Lydia the warmeſt and moſt imprudent letter that love ever dictated. Phanor was charged with the delivery of it. He went to her at the hazard of his life, if he ſhould be diſcovered. He was ſo. Mezentius, enraged, orders him to be loaden with irons, and dragged to a frightful priſon.

In the meanwhile, every thing was preparing for the celebrating of this fatal marriage. We may judge well that the feaſt correſponded to the character of Mezentius. Wreſtling, the ceſtus, gladiators, combats between men and animals bred up to carnage, every thing that barbarity has invented for its amuſements, was to have graced the pomp: nothing was wanting to this bloody ſpectacle, but perſons to fight againſt the wild beaſts; for it was cuſtomary to expoſe to theſe fights none but criminals condemned to die, and Mezentius, who on any ſuſpicion was always in a hurry to put the innocent to death, retarded ſtill leſs

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the punishment of the guilty. There remained in the prisons none but the faithful friend of Lausus. "Let him be exposed," said Mezentius; "let him fall a prey to devouring "lions: the traitor deserves a more cruel "death; but this best suits his crime and my "vengeance, and his punishment is a feast "worthy of injured love."

Lausus in vain expected the answer of his friend; impatience give way to affright. "Should we be discovered!" says he; "should "I have lost my friend by my fatal imprudence! Lydia herself.... Ah! I tremble. "No, I cannot live any longer in this dreadful uncertainty." He sets out; he disguises himself carefully; he arrives; he hears the reports spread among the people: he learns that his friend is in chains, and that the next day is to unite Lydia with Mezentius: he learns that they are preparing the feast which is to precede the marriage-festival, and that, by way of show at this festival, they are to see the unhappy Phanor a prey to wild beasts. He shrinks at this recital; a deadly chillness spreads through all his veins: he comes again to himself; but lost in distraction, he falls on his knees, and cries out, "Great gods, re"strain my hand, my despair terrifies me: let "me die to save my friend; but let me die "with my virtue!" Resolved to deliver his dear

dear Phanor though he ſhould periſh in his ſtead, he flies to the gates of the priſon: but how is he to enter there? He addreſſes himſelf to the ſlave, whoſe office it was to carry food to the priſoners. "Open "your eyes," ſaid he, and know me: I am "Lauſus, I am the ſon of the king. I ex- "pect from you an important ſervice: Phanor "is confined here; I will ſee him, I will. "I have but one way to come at him: give "me your clothes: fly! There are the "pledges of my acknowledgement; with- "draw yourſelf from the vengeance of my "father. If you betray me, you ruſh on "your ruin; if you aſſiſt me in my under- "taking, my favours ſhall find you in the "very heart of the deſerts."

That weak and timid man yields to his promiſes and menaces, he gives the Prince his clothes to diſguiſe himſelf, and diſappears, after having acquainted him of the hour wherein he was to preſent himſelf, and the method that he was to follow to deceive the vigilance of the guards. Night approaches, the moment arrives, Lauſus preſents himſelf: he aſſumes the name of the ſlave; the bolts of the dungeon open with a diſmal ſound. By the feeble glimmering of a torch, he penetrates into this manſion of horrour, he advances, he liſtens; the accents of a moaning voice ſtrike his ear, he knows it to be the voice of his friend, he ſees him

him lying down in a corner of the cell, covered with rags, conſumed with weakneſs, the paleneſs of death on his countenance, and the fire of deſpair in his eyes. "Leave me," ſaid Phanor to him, taking him for the ſlave; "away with theſe odious nouriſhments; ſuffer "me to die. Alas!" added he, ſending forth cries interrupted by ſighs, "alas! my dear "Lauſus is ſtill more unhappy than I. O, "ye gods! if he knows the ſtate to which "he has reduced his friend!" "Yes," cried Lauſus, throwing himſelf on his boſom, "yes "my dear Phanor, he does know it, and he "partakes of it." What do I ſee!" cried Phanor tranſported: "Ah, Lauſus! ah, my "prince!" At theſe words both of them loſe the uſe of their ſenſes; their arms are locked in each other, their hearts meet, their ſighs are intermingled. They remain for a long time mute and immoveable, ſtretched out on the floor of the dungeon; grief ſtifles their voice, and they anſwer each other only by embracing more cloſely, and bathing one another with their tears. Lauſus at laſt coming to himſelf, "Let us not loſe time," ſaid he to his friend; "take theſe clothes, get hence, "and leave me here."—"What I, great "gods! can I be ſo vile? Ah, Lauſus, could "you believe it? Ought you to propoſe it "to me?" "I know you well," ſaid the prince;

prince; "but you ſhould alſo know me. "The ſentence is pronounced, your puniſh- "ment is prepared, you muſt die or fly."— "Fly!"—"Hear me; my father is violent, "but he is ſenſible; Nature aſſerts her right "over his heart: if I deliver you from death, "I have only occaſion to melt him to com- "paſſion for myſelf; and his arm, when "lifted up againſt a ſon, will be eaſily diſ- armed." "He would ſtrike," ſaid Phanor, "and your death would be my crime; I can- "not abandon you." "Well then," ſaid Lauſus, "remain here; but at your death "you ſhall ſee mine alſo. Depend not on my "father's clemency; it would be in vain for "him to pardon me; think not that I would "pardon myſelf. This hand, which wrote "the fatal billet that condemns, this hand, "which, even after its crime, is ſtill the "hand of your friend, ſhall reunite us in "your own deſpite." In vain would Pha- nor have inſiſted upon it. "Let us not "talk any longer," interrupted Lauſus; you "can ſay nothing to me that can equal the "ſhame of ſurviving my friend, after I have "deſtroyed him. Your preſſing earneſtneſs "makes me bluſh, and your prayers are an "affront. I will anſwer for my own ſafety, "if you will fly: I ſwear to die, if you will

"ſtay and periſh. Chuſe: the moments now "are precious."

Phanor knew his friend too well to pretend to ſhake his reſolution. "I conſent," ſays he, "to let you try the only means of ſafety "that is left us; but live, if you would have "me live: your ſcaffold ſhall be mine." "I "readily believe it," ſaid Lauſus, "and your "friend eſteems you too much to deſire you "to ſurvive him." At theſe words they embraced, and Phanor went out of the dungeon in the habit of the ſlave, which Lauſus had juſt put off.

What a night! what a dreadful night for Lydia! Alas! how ſhall we paint the emotions that ariſe in her ſoul, that divide, that tear it, between love and virtue? She adores Lauſus, ſhe deteſts Mezentius, ſhe ſacrifices herſelf to her father's intereſts, ſhe delivers herſelf up to the object of her hatred, ſhe tears herſelf for ever from the wiſhes of an adored lover. They lead her to the altar as it were to puniſhment. Barbarous Mezentius! it ſuffices thee to reign over the heart by violence and fear; it ſuffices thee that thy conſort trembles before thee, as a ſlave before his maſter. Such is love in the heart of a tyrant.

Yet, alas! it is for him alone that ſhe is going to live: it is to him that ſhe is going

to

to be united. If ſhe reſiſts, ſhe muſt betray her lover and her father: a refuſal will diſcover the ſecret of her ſoul; and if Lauſus is ſuſpected to be dear to her, he is undone.

It was in this cruel agitation that Lydia waited the day. The terrible day arrives. Lydia, diſmayed and trembling, ſees herſelf decked out, not as a bride whom they are going to preſent at the altars of Love and Hymen, but as one of thoſe innocent victims which a barbarous piety crowned with flowers before it ſacrificed them.

They lead her to the place where the ſpectacle is to be exhibited, the people aſſemble there in multitudes, the ſports begin. I ſhall not ſtop to deſcribe the engagements at the ceſtus, at wreſtling, at the ſword; a more dreadful object engages our attention.

An huge lion advances. At firſt, with a tranquil pride, he ſtalks through the arena, caſting his terrible looks along the amphitheatre that ſurrounds him: a confuſed murmur proclaims the dread that he inſpires. In a ſhort time the ſound of the clarions animate him; he replies by his roarings; his ſhaggy mane is erected around his monſtrous head; he laſhes his loins with his tail, and the fire begins to iſſue from his ſparkling eye-balls. The populace affrighted wiſh and dread to ſee

the wretch appear, who is to be delivered up to the rage of this monſter. Terror and pity ſeize on every breaſt.

The combatant, whom Mezentius's guards themſelves had taken for Phanor, preſents himſelf. Lydia could not diſtinguiſh him. The horrour with which ſhe was ſeiſed had obliged her to turn away her eyes from this ſpectacle, which ſhocks the ſenſibility of her compaſſionate ſoul. What would it be, alas! if ſhe knew that Phanor, that the tender friend of Lauſus, is the criminal whom they have devoted; if ſhe knew that Lauſus himſelf had taken his friend's place, and that it is he that is going to fight?

Half-naked, his hair diſhevelled, he walks with an intrepid ſtep: a poinard for the attack, a buckler for defence, are the only arms by which he is protected. Mezentius, prepoſſeſſed, ſees in him only the guilty Phanor. His own blood is dumb, Nature is blind; it is his own ſon whom he delivers up to death, and his bowels are not moved; reſentment of injury and thirſt of vengeance ſtifle in him every other ſentiment. He ſees with a barbarous joy the fury of the lion animating by degrees. Lauſus, impatient, provokes the monſter, and urges him to the combat. He advances towards him, the lion ſprings forward. Lauſus avoids him. Thrice the enraged animal preſents

ſents to him his foaming jaws, and thrice Lauſus eſcapes his murderous fangs.

Phanor in the mean time is informed of what is doing. He runs, he cuts through the crowd, his piercing cries make the amphitheatre ring. "Stop, Mezentius! ſave "thy ſon, it is he, it is Lauſus who is "fighting." Mezentius looks and knows Phanor, who haſtens towards him: "O ye "gods! what do I ſee! My people, aſſiſt me; "throw yourſelves on the arena, raviſh my "ſon from the jaws of death." At the name of Lauſus, Lydia falls down dead on the ſteps of the amphitheatre; her heart is frozen, her eyes are covered with darkneſs. Mezentius ſees only his ſon, who is now in inevitable danger: a thouſand hands arm in vain for his defence; the monſter purſues him, and would have devoured him, before they could have arrived to his aſſiſtance. But, O! wonder incredible! O happineſs unhoped! Lauſus, while he eludes the bounds of the furious animal, ſtrikes him a mortal blow, and the ſword, with which he is armed, is drawn reeking from the lion's heart. He falls, and ſwims in ſeas of blood, vomited through his foaming jaws. The univerſal alarm now changes into triumph, and the people reply to Mezentius's doleful cries only by ſhouts of admiration and joy. Theſe ſhouts recall Lydia to life;

ſhe opens her eyes; ſhe ſees Lauſus at Mezentius's feet, holding in one hand the bloody dagger, and in the other his dear and faithful Phanor. "It is I," ſaid he to his father, it "is I alone who am culpable. Phanor's "crime was mine: it was for me to expiate "it. I forced him to reſign me his place; I "was about to kill myſelf, if he refuſed. I "live, I owe that life to him; and if your "ſon be dear to you ſtill, you owe your ſon "to him: but if your vengeance is not ap-"peaſed, our days are in your hands: ſtrike; "we will periſh together; our hearts have "ſworn it." Lydia, trembling at this diſcourſe, viewed Mezentius with eyes ſuppliant, and overflowing with tears. The tyrant's cruelty could not withſtand this tryal. The cries of nature and the voice of remorſe put to ſilence jealouſy and vengeance in his heart. He remains for a long time immoveable, and dumb, rolling by turns, on the objects that ſurround him, looks of trouble and confuſion, in which love, hatred, indignation and pity, combat and ſucceed each other. All tremble around the tyrant. Lauſus, Phanor, Lydia, a multitude innumerable, wait with terrour the firſt words that he is to pronounce. He ſubmits at laſt, in ſpite of himſelf, to that virtue whoſe aſcendency overpowers him; and paſſing of a ſudden, with impetuous violence, from rage to tender-

tenderneſs, he throws himſelf into his ſon's arms. "Yes," ſays he to him, "I pardon "thee, and I pardon alſo thy friend. Live, "love one another: but there remains one "ſacrifice more for me to make thee, and "thou haſt juſt now rendered thyſelf worthy "of it. Receieve it then," ſaid he with a new effort, "receive this hand, the gift of which "is dearer to thee than life: it is thy valour "which has forced it from me: it is that a-"lone could obtain it."

LUCKILY.

"NO Madam," ſaid Abbe Chateneuf to the old Marchioneſs of Liſban, "it is im-"poſſible for me to believe that what is cal-"led virtue in a woman, is ſo rare, as is "commonly ſaid; and I would wager, with-"out going further, that you have always "been virtuous."—"Faith my dear Abbe, "I could almoſt ſay to you, what Agnes ſays "in one of Moliere's plays: Bleſs me! *don't* "*wager*."—"What ſhould I loſe?" "No, "you would win, but by ſo ſmall a degree "ſo very ſmall a degree, that to ſpeak frank-

"ly

" ly, it is not worth bragging of.—That is to " ſay, your virtue has run ſome riſks."—" A- " las! yes! more than once I have ſeen it on " the very point of being wrecked. *Luckily* it is " arrived ſafe to the port."—Ah, Madam, " truſt me with the recital of your adventures." —" With all my heart. We are arrived at " an age wherein we have no longer any thing " to diſſemble, and my youth is now ſo far " removed from me, that I may ſpeak of it as " of a fine dream.

" If you recollect the Marquis of Liſban, " he was one of thoſe inſipid fine figures, " Which ſay to you, *Here am I!* He was one " of thoſe aukward pieces of vanity which " always miſs their aim. He valued himſelf on " every thing, and was good at nothing: he " took the lead in converſation, demanded " ſilence, ſuſpended the attention, and then " brought out the flatteſt ſpeech in the world. " He laughed before he told a ſtory, but no " one elſe laughed at his ſtories; he aimed " often at being refined, and gave ſuch fine " turns to what he ſaid, that at laſt he did " not know what he was ſaying: when he had " given ladies the vapours, he thought he had " made them penſive: when they were divert- " ing themſelves with his follies, he took it " for coquetry."—" Ah, Madam, what a " happy temper!"—" Our firſt interviews

" were

" were filled with the recital of his intrigues.
" I began by liſtening to him with impatience;
" I ended by hearing him with diſguſt: I even
" took the liberty of declaring to my parents
" that the creature tired me to death. They
" replied, that I was a ſimpleton, for that a
" huſband was formed to do ſo: I married
" him. They made me promiſe to love him
" alone: my mouth ſaid *Yes*, my heart ſaid
" *No*, and it was my heart that kept its
" promiſe to him. The Count of Palmene
" preſented himſelf before me with all the
" graces of mind and figure. My huſband, who
" introduced him, did the honours of my mo-
" deſty: he replied to the handſome things
" the Count ſaid on his happineſs, with an
" air of ſuperiority that made me mad. To
" believe him, I loved him to diſtraction;
" and thence all that indiſcreet diſcloſure of
" ſecrets, no leſs ſhocking to truth than de-
" corum, and in which vanity abuſes the
" ſilence of modeſty. I was not able to con-
" tain myſelf; I quitted the room, and Pal-
" mene could perceive by my diſguſt, that
" the Marquis impoſed upon him. " The im-
" pertinent creature," ſaid I to myſelf: " he
" goes on boaſting of his triumphs, becauſe
" he is perſuaded I ſhall not have the cou-
" rage to contradict him. They will believe
" him, they will ſuppoſe me careleſs enough

" to

" to love the ſillieſt and vaineſt man in the " world. If he had ſpoke of an honeſt at- " tachment to my duty, I could have borne " it; but to talk of love! of a weakneſs for " him! this is enough to bring a diſgrace " on me. No, I would not have it ſaid in " the world, that I am fond of my huſband: " It is of the higheſt conſequence that I " ſhould undeceive Palmene; and with him " I ought to begin."

" My huſband, who congratulated him- " ſelf on having put me out of countenance, " did not diſcover, any better than myſelf, " the true cauſe of my confuſion and anger. " He valued himſelf too much, and loved me " too little to condeſcend to be jealous. " You " have behaved like a child," ſaid he to me " when the Count was gone: " I can tell you, " however, that he thinks you charming. " Yet do not liſten too much to him, he " is a dangerous man." I felt it much bet- " ter than he could tell me.

" Next day the Count de Palmene came " to ſee me; he found me alone. " Do you " forgive me, Madam," ſaid he, " for the " confuſion I ſaw you in yeſterday? I was " the innocent cauſe of it, but I could freely " have diſpenſed with the Marquis's making " me his confident." " I know not," ſaid " I to him, looking down, " why he takes ſo

" much

"much pleaſure in relating what it gives me "ſo much pain to hear."—"When we are "ſo happy, Madam, we are very pardonable "in being indiſcreet."—"If he is happy, I "congratulate him on it; but indeed he has "no reaſon."—"What! can he be other-"wiſe," replied the Count with a ſigh, "when "he poſſeſſes the moſt beautiful woman in the "world?"—"Suppoſe, Sir, ſuppoſe for once "that I am ſo; where is the glory, the me-"rit, the happineſs of poſſeſſing me? Was "it I who diſpoſed of myſelf?"—"No, Ma-"dam, but if I may believe him, you ſoon "applauded the choice they had made for you." "What! Sir! will the men never conſider "that they train us up to diſſimulation from our "infancy; that we loſe our frankneſs with our "liberty; and that it is no longer the time to "require of us to be ſincere, when they have "impoſed it as a duty on us to be other-"wiſe?" Here I was a little too much ſo my-"ſelf, and perceived it too late: hope had "now inſinuated itſelf into the Count's ſoul. "To confeſs that one does not love one's huſ-"band, is almoſt to confeſs that we love "another, and the perſon who is made the "confident of ſuch a confeſſion, is very often "the object of it.

"Theſe ideas had plunged the Count into "a pleaſing reverie. "You have diſſembled

"then

" then mighty well," ſaid he, after a long " ſilence; " for the Marquis has told me aſto- " niſhing things of your mutual love,"—— " Very well, Sir; let him flatter himſelf as " much as he pleaſes: I ſhall not try to un- " deceive him."—" But for yourſelf, Madam, " ought you to be unhappy?"—" I do my " duty, I ſubmit to my deſtiny: queſtion me " no more about it, and above all make no " ill uſe of the ſecret which the imprudence " of my huſband, my own natural ſincerity, " and my impatience have forced from me." —" I! Madam, may I die ſooner than be " unworthy your confidence. But I would " enjoy it alone, and without reſerve; look " upon me as a friend who ſhares all your " diſquiets, and in whoſe breaſt you may " ſafely depoſit them."

" This name of *friend* infuſed into my heart " a perfidious tranquillity: I no longer miſ- " truſted either myſelf or him. A friend of " twenty-four hours, of the Count's age and " figure, appeared to me the moſt reaſon- " able, as well as the moſt decent thing in " the world; and a huſband ſuch as mine, the " thing of all the world the moſt ridiculous " and moſt afflicting to me.

" The latter obtained no longer, from the " duty I owed him, any more than a few cold " civilities, of which, however, he had ſtill

" the

" the folly to pride himſelf; and was always " mentioning them in confidence to Palmene, " and at the ſame time exaggerating their " value. The Count knew not what to think " of it. " Why deceive me," ſaid he ſome- " times? " Why diſown a commendable ſen- " ſibility? Are you aſhamed to contradict your- " ſelf?"—" Alas! No, Sir, I could glory in " it; but I am not happy enough to have oc- " ſion to retract."

" At theſe words my eyes were filled with " tears. Palmene was melted by them. What " did he not ſay to me to ſoften my ſorrows! " What pleaſure did I take in hearing him! " O, my dear Abbé! the dangerous com- " forter! He aſſumed from that moment an " abſolute empire over my ſoul, and of all " my thoughts my love for him was the only " one I concealed from him. He had never " ſpoke to me of his own paſſion but under " the title of friendſhip; but making an ill " uſe at laſt of the aſcendent he had over me, " he writ to me as follows: " I have de- " ceived myſelf, and impoſed upon you: that " friendſhip, ſo calm and ſo ſweet, to which I " reſigned myſelf without fear, is become " love, the moſt violent, the moſt paſſionate " that ever exiſted. I ſhall ſee you this even- " ing, to devote my life to you, or to bid " you an eternal farewell."

" I ſhall not explain to you, my dear Abbé, " the different emotions that aroſe in my ſoul: " all I know is, that virtue, love, and fear, " ſtrove there together; but I likewiſe re- " member well that joy had its part. I en- " deavoured, however, to prepare myſelf for " making a good defence. Firſt, I thought I " would not be alone, and I will go and tell " them to let in all the world. Secondly, I " reſolved I would look at him but very " ſlightly, without giving his eyes an oppor- " tunity to fix themſelves for one moment on " mine. This effort will coſt me dear; but " virtue is not virtue for nothing. In ſhort, " I will avoid giving him an opportunity of " ſpeaking to me in particular; and, if he " ſhould dare to attempt it, I will anſwer him " in a tone, in ſuch a tone as ſhall deceive " him.

" My reſolution being taken, I ſat down " to my toilette, and without attending to it, " dreſſed myſelf that day with more grace and " elegance than ever. In the evening a pro- " digious deal of company came to ſee me, " and this company put me out of humour. " My huſband alſo, more earneſt and aſſi- " duous than uſual, as if he had done it on " purpoſe, haraſſed me almoſt to death. At " length they announced Palmene. He bluſh- " ed, he paid his reſpects to me: I received

" him

" him with a profound curteſey, without deign-
" ing to raiſe my eyes towards him, and ſaid
" to myſelf. " Well, this is very fine!"
" The converſation at firſt was general: Pal-
" mene let drop ſome words, which, to the
" reſt of the company, carried very little
" meaning, but ſignified a great deal to me.
" I pretended not to underſtand them, and
" applauded myſelf in my own mind for ſo
" well ſupported a rigour. Palmene had not
" the courage to approach me: my huſband
" forced him to it by his familiar pleaſantries.
" The Count's reſpect and timidity ſoftened
" me. " The poor wretch," ſaid I, " is more
" to be pitied than blamed; if he dared, he
" would aſk pardon of me; but he will never
" have the courage. I will cheer him, by a
" look. " I have been guilty of an indiſ-
" cretion, Madam," ſaid he to me: " do
" you pardon me for it?"—" No, Sir."
" This *No*, pronounced I know not how,
" appeared to me very great. Palmene got
" up, as it were to go: my huſband retained
" him by force. Word was brought us that
" ſupper was on table. " Come, my dear
" Count, be gallant; give my wife your
" hand: ſhe ſeems to me to be rather in ill-
" humour; but we ſhall be able to drive it
" away."

" Palmene in deſpair ſqueezed my hand; " I looked at him, and thought I ſaw in his " eyes the image of love and grief. I was " touched with it, my dear Abbe; and by a " movement, which proceeded from my heart " my hand replied to his. I cannot deſcribe " to you the change which appeared all of " a ſudden on his countenance. It ſparkled " with joy, and that joy diffuſed itſelf into " the ſouls of all the company. Love, and " the deſire of pleaſing, ſeemed to animate " them all as well as himſelf.

" The diſcourſe fell upon gallantry. My " huſband, who thought himſelf an Ovid in " the art of love, delivered a thouſand im- " pertinencies on the ſubject. The Count, " in his anſwers, endeavoured to ſoften them " with a delicacy and ingenuity that quite " charmed me. *Luckily*, a young fop, who " had ſeated himſelf by me, took it into his " head to ſay handſome things to me. *Luc-* " *kily* alſo I gave him ſome attention, and " anſwered him with an air of ſatisfaction. " The amiable Palmene now changed of a " ſudden both his language and temper. The " converſation had paſſed from love to co- " quetry. The Count inveighed againſt that " general deſire of pleaſing, with a warmth " and gravity that aſtoniſhed me. " I for- " give," ſaid he, " a woman for changing

" her

"her lover; I can ever pardon her having
"ſeveral; all this is agreeable to nature: it
"is not her fault if they cannot fix her: at
"leaſt, if ſhe ſeeks to captivate only thoſe ſhe
"loves, and whom ſhe makes happy, and if
"ſhe contributes at one time to the happineſs
"of two or three, it is only a bleſſing multi-
"plied. But a coquette is a tyrant that wants
"to enſlave all, merely for the pleaſure of
"having ſlaves. Idolatreſs of herſelf, all the
"reſt is nothing to her: her pride makes a
"ſport of our weakneſs, and a triumph of our
"torments: her looks are falſe, her mouth
"deceitful, her language and her behaviour
"are only a ſeries of ſnares, her graces ſo
"many Syrens, her charms ſo many poiſons."

"This declamation aſtoniſhed all preſent.
"What! Sir," ſaid the young gentleman to
"him, who had talked to me, "do you prefer
"a woman of gallantry to a coquette!"—
"Yes, without doubt do I, and it is beyond
"all diſpute." "Such a one is more con-
"venient," ſaid I to him ironically. "And
"more eſtimable, Madam," replied he with
"an air of chagrin, "more eſtimable a thou-
"ſand times." I confeſs to you that I was
"piqued at this inſult. "Come, Sir," re-
"plied I with diſdain, "it is to no purpoſe
"that you reproach us, as with a crime, of one
"of the moſt innocent and moſt natural pl a-

"ſures in the world; your opinion will not "be a law. The coquettes, you ſay, are "tyrants: you are a much greater tyrant "yourſelf, for wanting to deprive us of the "only advantage that nature has given us. "If we muſt give up the deſire of pleaſing, "what have we left in ſociety? Talents, "genius, the ſtriking virtues, all theſe you "have, or think you have: it is permitted a "woman only to pretend to be amiable; and "yet you condemn her moſt cruelly never to "wiſh to be ſo, except to one man. This is to "bury her alive amidſt the living; this is to "render the whole world nothing to her."

"Ah! Madam," ſaid the Count to me in a "pet, "you are in the way of the world! In-"deed I could not have believed it." "You "are wrong, my dear," replied my huſband, "you are wrong: my wife would pleaſe every "body, but deſires to make none happy but "me. That is cruel, I confeſs, and I have "told her ſo a hundred times; but it is her "foible: ſo much the worſe for the dupes. "Beſides, why take ſo ſeriouſly what is but "a jeſt? If ſhe takes a pleaſure in hearing "herſelf called handſome, muſt ſhe for that "reaſon reply in the ſame ſtrain? She loves "me, that is plain; but you, and as many "others as amuſe her, ye have no pretenſions "to her heart. She keeps that for me, and

"I

"I defy any body to rob me of it." "You "ſhut my mouth," ſaid Palmene, "the mo- "ment you cite your lady for an example, "and I have nothing to ſay in reply." At "theſe words they went out from table.

"I conceived from that inſtant, I will not "ſay averſion for the Count, but a dread which "almoſt comes up to it. "What a ſtrange "man!" ſaid I in myſelf; "what an imperious "diſpoſition! He would make a woman mi- "ſerable." After ſupper he fell into a ſullen "ſilence, from which nothing could rouſe "him. At laſt, finding me for a moment "alone, "Do you really think as you ſpoke?" "demanded he with the air of a ſevere judge. —"Certainly."—"Enough: you ſhall never "ſee me more as long as I live."

"*Luckily* he kept his word with me, and "I perceived, by the chagrin which this "rupture gave me, all the danger I had run. "See," ſaid the Abbé, moraliſing very gravely, "what one moment of ill temper produces. "A trifle becomes a ſerious affair: we are "exaſperated, humbled, love is terrified, and "flies."

"The character of the Chevalier de Luzel," reſumed the Marchioneſs, "was quite the "reverſe of that of the Count de Palmene."— "This gentleman, Madam, was without "doubt the perſon who was ſo ſweet upon

"you

"you during ſupper?"—"Yes, my dear "Abbé, the ſame. He was beautiful as "Narciſſus, and he loved himſelf no leſs: he "had vivacity, and a gentility in his under- "ſtanding, but not the ſhadow of common "ſenſe.

"Ah! Marchioneſs," ſaid he to me, "this "Palmene of yours is a melancholy creature! "What do you do with the man! He talks, "he moraliſes, he overwhelms us with his "arguments For my own part, I know but "two things; to amuſe myſelf, and to be "amuſing to others: I know the world I "live in, I ſee what paſſes there; I ſee that "the greateſt of evils that afflict mankind is "dullneſs. Now this dullneſs proceeds from "an evenneſs in the temper, a conſtancy in "our connexions, a ſolidity in our taſtes, a "monotony, in ſhort, which gives a ſleepi- "neſs even to pleaſure itſelf; while levity, "caprice, coquetry, keep it awake. Beſides, "I love coquettes to diſtraction: coquetry is "the charm of ſociety. Beſides, ſenſible "women are tireſome in the long-run. It is "a good thing to have ſome body with whom "you may unbend." "With me," ſaid I to "him ſmiling, "you may unbend as much "as you pleaſe."—"And that now is what I "want, what I ſeek in a coquette; to op- "poſe, to reſiſt, to defend herſelf, if poſſible.

"Yes,

"Yes, Madam, I would fly you, if I thought "you capable of a ſerious attachment." "Ma- "dam," replied the Abbé gravely, "this "young fop was a dangerous perſon."—"I "aſſure you, my good friend, he was, and I "was not long before I perceived it. I treated "him at firſt as a child, and this aſcendency "of my underſtanding over his could not but "be very flattering at my time of life; but he "might be taken from me by ſome body. I "began to grow uneaſy at it. His abſences "put me out of humour, his connexions "raiſed my jealouſy. I demanded ſacrifices, "and wanted to impoſe laws.

"Well now," ſaid he to me one day when "I was reproaching him for his diſſipation, "would you work a little miracle? Make me "diſcreet at once, I aſk nothing better." I "underſtood very well, that to make him "diſcreet, there was a neceſſity for ceaſing "to be ſo myſelf. I aſked him, however, on "what this little miracle depended. "On a "trifle," ſaid he: "we ſeem to me to love one "another already; the reſt is not very diffi- "cult."—"If we loved one another, as you "ſay, but which I do not believe, the mi- "racle would be already performed! love "alone would have rendered you diſcreet."— "Oh! no, Madam, we muſt be juſt: I wil- "ingly abandon all other hearts for your's;

"win

" win or loſe, it is the chance of the game, " and I wiſh to run the hazard of it; but " yet there is an exchange to make, and in " conſcience you cannot aſk that I ſhould re- " nounce all pleaſure for nothing." " Ma- " dam," interrupted the Abbé, " the Chevalier " was not ſo unprovided of ſenſe as you ſay, " and here he reaſoned pretty well." " I was " aſtoniſhed," ſaid the Marchioneſs; " but " the more I perceived he was in the right, " the more I endeavoured to perſuade him " that he was wrong. I even told him, as " far as I can remember, ſome of the fineſt " things in the world on honour, duty, and " conjugal fidelity: he took no heed of them; " he pretended that honour was only a deco- " rum, marriage a ceremony, and the oath of " fidelity a compliment, a piece of politeneſs, " which in reality bound us to nothing. So much was ſaid on one ſide and the other, " that we began to loſe ourſelves in our ideas " when on a ſudden my huſband arrived."

Luckily, Madam!" —— "Oh! very " luckily, I confeſs: never did huſband " come more opportunely. We were " confuſed; my bluſhes would have betrayed " me, and, for want of time to recollect my- " ſelf, I ſaid to the chevalier, *Hide yourſelf.* " He retired into the cloſet of my dreſſing- " room."—" A dangerous retreat, Madam!" —" It

—" It was ſo; but this cloſet had a back-
" door, and I was eaſy about the Chevalier's
" eſcape." " Madam," ſaid the Abbé, with
" his air of reflection, " I would lay a wager
" that the Chevalier is yet in the cloſet."
" Patience," replied the Marchioneſs, " we
" are not come to the unravelling of the
" plot. My huſband accoſted me with that
" air of ſelf content which appeared always
" on his countenance; and I, in order to
" conceal my embarraſſment from him, ran
" up haſtily to embrace him with an excla-
" mation of ſurpriſe and joy. " So, you
" little fool," ſaid he to me, " there now
" I ſuppoſe you are pleaſed! You ſee me
" again. I am very good to come and paſs
" the evening with this poor thing. You are
" not aſhamed then to love your huſband?
" Do you know that it is ridiculous, and that
" they ſay without doors that they muſt bury
" us together, or that I muſt be baniſhed
" from you; that you are good for nothing,
" ever ſince you have been my wife; that you
" drive all your lovers into deſpair, and that
" you ought to be puniſhed for it?"—" I
" Sir! I drive no body into deſpair. Do not
" you know me? I am one of the beſt-na-
" tured women in the world."—" What an
" air of ſimplicity! One would believe it.
" Thus, for example, Palmene ought to take

" it

" it for granted that you have not played the " coquette with him: the Chevalier ought to " be content that you prefer your huſband to " him; and what a huſband too! A dull, " inſipid fellow, who has not even common " ſenſe: is it not ſo? What a contraſt to an " elegant Chevalier!"—" Indeed I form no " compariſon between you."—" The Che- " valier has wit, vivacity, and grace. How " do I know but he has the gift alſo of tears? " Has he never wept at your knees? You " bluſh! That is almoſt a confeſſion. Out " with it, tell me." " Have done," ſaid I to " him, " or I'll leave the room."—" What! " do not you ſee that I am joking?"—" Such " joking would deſerve. . . ." How now! " what, angry! You threaten me too! You " may, but I ſhall not be at all the leſs eaſy." —" You take advantage of my virtue."— " Of your virtue? Oh, not at all: I depend " only on my own planet, which will not " ſuffer me to be made a fool of!"—" And " you truſt to your planet?"—" I truſt ſo " ſtrongly in it, I depend ſo thoroughly upon " it, that I defy you to counteract it. Hark " ye, child, I have known women without " number; and not one, whatever I did, " could reſolve with herſelf to be untrue to " me. Ah! I may ſay without vanity, that " when they love me, they love me heartily.

" Not

" Not that I am better than any other: I do " not flatter myſelf ſo far as that; but there " is a certain *je ne ſcai quoi*, as Moliere ſays, " which cannot be explained." At theſe " words, ſurveying himſelf with his eyes, he " walked before a glaſs. " You ſee too," " continued he, " how little reſtraint I put " upon you. For example, to-night have " you any appointment, any *tete-a tete?* I " take my leave. It is merely on a ſuppo- " ſition that you are diſengaged, that I come " to paſs the evening with you." " However " that be," ſaid I to him, " you will do well " to ſtay."—" For the greater ſurety, is it " not ſo?"—" Perhaps ſo."—" I thank you: " I ſee I muſt ſup with you." " Sup then " quickly," interrupted the Abbé, " the Mar- " quis makes me impatient: I am in pain till " you get up from table, till you are retired " into your own apartment, and your huſband " leaves you there."—" Well, my dear Abbé, " behold me there, in the moſt cruel anxiety " I ever experienced in my life. My ſoul " ſtruggling (I bluſh at it yet) between fear " and deſire, I advance with a trembling pace " towards the cloſet of my dreſſing room, " to ſee at laſt if my fears have any founda- " tion: I perceive no body there, I think him " gone, this perfidious Chevalier; but, *by good* " *luck*, I hear ſome body ſpeaking in a low

" voice in the next room: I draw near, I " liſten: it was Luzel himſelf, with the " youngeſt of my women. " It is true," ſaid " he, " I came here with a deſign upon the " Marchioneſs, but chance uſes me better than " love. What a compariſon! and how un- " juſt is fortune! Your miſtreſs is well enough; " but has ſhe that ſhape, that air of neatneſs, " that bloom, that gentility? For example " now, it is ſuch that ought to be of quality. " A woman muſt either be very modeſt, or " very vain, to have an attendant of your age " and figure! Faith, Lucy, if the Graces " are made like you, Venus cannot ſhine " much at her toilette."—" Keep your gal- " lantries, Sir, for my lady, and remember " that ſhe will be here preſently." — " Oh, " no, ſhe is with her huſband; they are the " beſt in the world together. I even think, " God forgive me! that I heard them ſaying " tender things to each other. It would be " pleaſant if he ſhould come to paſs the night " with her. But however that be, ſhe does " not know that I am here, and from this " moment I am no longer for her."—" But, " Sir, you do not conſider; what is to be- " come of me if they ſhould know it?" — " Take courage, I have provided for every " thing: if to-morrow they ſhould ſee me go " out, it is eaſy to give it a proper turn."—

" But,

" But, Sir, my lady's honour . . ."—" Stuff: " your lady's honour is mightily concerned in " it! So much the better, after all, if they " ſhould give her ſuch a man as myſelf: that " would bring her into faſhion."—" Oh! " the wretch," cried the Abbé. — " Judge, " my friend," reſumed the Marchioneſs, " my " indignation at this diſcourſe. I was on " the point of burſting out upon them; but " ſuch a burſt of paſſion would have ruined " me: neither my people nor my huſband " would have been able to perſuade them- " ſelves that the Chevalier came there on " Lucy's account. I reſolved to diſſemble: " I rang; Lucy appeared: I had never ſeen " her look ſo handſome before; for jealouſy " embelliſhes its object, when it cannot make " it ugly. " Was that one of your maſter's " ſervants," ſaid I to her, " whom I juſt now " heard talking with you?" " Yes, Madam," " replied ſhe with confuſion. " Let him " withdraw this inſtant, and do not come " back till he is gone." I ſaid no more; but " whether Lucy ſaw through me, or fear " determined her to ſend away the Chevalier, " he retired that inſtant, and got out undiſ- " covered. You may eaſily judge, my dear " Abbé, that my door was ever after ſhut " againſt him, and that Lucy, the next day, " dreſſed my head ill, did every thing wrong,

" was good for nothing, put me quite out of " patience, and was diſcharged." — " You " had reaſon, Madam," cried the Abbé, " to " ſay that your virtue has ran ſome riſques." " This is not all," continued ſhe; " I ſhall " now entertain you with another adventure. " We paſſed the ſummer every year at our " country houſe at Corbeil, where we had a " celebrated painter for our neighbour, which " inſpired the Marquis with the gallant notion " of having my portrait and his own. You " know that it was his foible to believe him- " ſelf beloved by me. He would have us re- " preſented in the ſame piece, chained together " by Hymen with wreaths of flowers." The " painter took the hint; but being accuſtomed " to draw after Nature, he deſired to have a " model for the figure of Hymen. In the " ſame village was at that time a young Abbé, " who now and then came to ſee us. His " fine eyes, his roſy mouth, his complexion " ſcarce yet ſhaded with the down of youth, " his hair of a bright flaxen colour, flowing " in ſmall ringlets on a neck whiter than ivory, " the tender vivacity of his looks, the deli- " cacy and regularity of his features, every " thing in him ſeemed made for the purpoſe " they wanted. The Marquis prevailed on " the Abbé to conſent to ſerve as a model to " the painter."

At this beginning, the Abbé de Chateauneuf redoubled his attention; but contained himſelf till the end, in order to hear the concluſion of the ſtory.

" The expreſſion to be given to the coun-
" tenances," continued the Marchioneſs, " pro-
" duced excellent ſcenes between the painter
" and the Marquis. The more my huſband
" endeavoured to put on an air of ſenſibility,
" the more ſimple he looked. The painter
" copied faithfully, and the Marquis was
" enraged at ſeeing himſelf painted to the life.
" For my part, I had ſomething of mockery
" in my countenance, which the painter imi-
" tated as well. The Marquis ſwore, the
" artiſt retouched without ceaſing; but he
" ſtill found again on the canvas the air of a
" ſly baggage and a fool. At laſt a dullneſs
" ſeized me; the Marquis took it for a ſoft
" languor: on his ſide he gave himſelf a
" fooliſh laugh, which he called a tender
" ſmile, and the painter came off for drawing
" him as he ſaw him. We were to proceed
" next to the figure of Hymen. " Come,"
" Sir," ſaid the painter to the Abbé, " now
" for the Graces, and voluptuouſneſs! Look
" tenderly on the lady; ſtill more tenderly:"
" Take her hand," added my huſband, " and
" imagine that you are ſaying to her, Fear
" not, my dear; theſe bands are made of

" flowers; ſtrong, but light. Animate your-
" ſelf then, my dear Abbé: your counte-
" nance has no expreſſion in it: you have the
" air of a Hymen benumbed." The young
" man profited wonderfully by the inſtruc-
" tions of the painter and the Marquis. His
" timidity vaniſhed by degrees, his mouth
" wore an amorous ſmile, his complexion was
" heightened with a livelier red; his eyes
" ſparkled with a gentler flame, and his hand
" preſſed mine with a tremor, which myſelf
" only could perceive. I muſt tell you all;
" the emotion of his ſoul paſſed into mine,
" and I viewed the god with much more ten-
" derneſs than I had done my ſpouſe. " There!
" the very thing!" ſaid the Marquis: " go
" on, Abbé; admirable! Is not it?" ſaid he
" to the painter. " We ſhall make ſome-
" thing of this little model. Come, wife,
" do not let us be caſt down: I knew very
" well that it would be a fine piece. There,
" you are now juſt as I wanted: courage,
" Abbé; go on, Madam; I leave you both
" in the right attitude. Do not change it till
" I return." As ſoon as the Marquis was
" gone, my little Abbé became quite heavenly;
" my eyes devoured his, and yet I could not
" be ſatisfied. The ſittings were long, and
" ſeemed to us to laſt only for a moment.
" What a pity," ſaid the painter, " that I

" did

" did not take my lady at ſuch a juncture as " this! There is the expreſſion I wiſhed for! " Quite another countenance. Ah! Sir, what " a pleaſure it is to copy you! You do not " flag at all: your features become more and " more animated. No inattention, Madam; " fix your eyes on his; my Hymen will be a " capital figure." When the head of the Hy- " men was finiſhed, " I want, Madam," ſaid " he to me one day in my huſband's abſence, " I want to retouch your portrait. Change " places, Abbé, and take that of the Mar- " quis." " Why ſo, Sir?" ſaid I bluſhing. " Oh! Heavens! Madam, let me alone. I " know better than you what will ſet you off " to advantage." I underſtood him thoroughly, " and the Abbé bluſhed at it, as well as my- " ſelf. The artifice of the painter had a won- " derful effect. The languor he had given " me gave place to the moſt touching expreſ- " ſion of timid voluptuouſneſs. The Mar- " quis, at his return, could not ceaſe ad- " miring this change, which he could not " comprehend. " This is very ſtrange!" ſaid " he: " it looks as if the picture had ani- " mated itſelf."—" It is the effect of my co- " lours," replied the painter coldly, " to " diſplay themſelves thus in proportion as " they take place. You will ſee it quite a " different thing in a ſhort time from what it

" is

" is now!" — " But my head," reſumed the " Marquis, " to me does not ſeem to improve " ſo."—" That is eaſily accounted for," re- " plied the artiſt: " the lineaments are " ſtronger, and the colours leſs delicate. But " do not be impatient: it will become, in " time, one of the fineſt huſband's heads that " ever was ſeen."

" When the picture was finiſhed, the Abbé " and myſelf fell into a profound melancholy. " Thoſe ſoft moments in which our ſouls " ſpoke through our eyes, and ſhot them- " ſelves into one another, were now no more. " His timidity and my modeſty laid us under " a cruel reſtraint. He no longer dared to " viſit us ſo often, and I no longer dared to " invite him myſelf.

" In ſhort, one day when he happened to " be at our houſe, I found him alone, mo- " tionleſs and penſive, before the picture. " You are well employed, Sir," ſaid I to " him.—" Yes, Madam," replied he briſkly; " I am enjoying the only pleaſure that will " henceforth be permitted me: I am admiring " yourſelf in your picture."—" You are ad- " miring me? That is very gallant!" —— " Ah! I would ſay more if I durſt."—" In- " deed? You are content?" — " Content, " Madam! I am enchanted. Alas! why are " you not ſtill ſuch as I ſee you in this pic-

" ture!"

" ture!"—" It is pretty well," interrupted " I, pretending not to underſtand him; " but " yours appears to me to be better "—" Bet- " ter, Madam, what is it you ſay? Mine is " as cold as ice."—" You joke about your " coldneſs; nothing in the world can be more " lively."—" Ah, Madam! had I but been " at liberty to ſuffer that to diſplay itſelf in my " countenance which paſſed in my heart? " you ſhould have ſeen quite another thing. " But how could I expreſs what I felt in thoſe " moments? If not the Marquis, the painter " had his eyes continually upon me. I was " obliged to aſſume a tranquil air. Would " you ſee," added he, " how I ſhould have " viewed you, if we had been without wit- " neſſes? Give me once more that hand " which I preſſed not without trembling, and " let us reſume the ſame attitude. Would " you believe it, my friend? I had the cu- " rioſity, the complaiſance, and, if you pleaſe, " the weakneſs, to let my hand drop into his. " I muſt confeſs, I never ſaw any thing ſo " tender, ſo paſſionate, ſo touching, as the " figure of my little Abbé at this dangerous " conference. Voluptuouſneſs ſmiled on his " lips, deſire ſparkled in his eyes, and all the " flowers of the ſpring ſeemed to blow on his " beautiful cheeks. He preſſed my hand " againſt his heart, and I felt it beat with a

" vivacity

" vivacity that communicated itſelf to mine.
" Yes," ſaid I to him, endeavouring to diſ-
" ſemble my confuſion, " that would be more
" expreſſive, I confeſs; but it would no longer
" be the figure of Hymen."—" No, Madam,
" no, it would be that of Love; but Hymen
" at your feet ought to be no other than Love
" himſelf." At theſe words he ſeemed to
" forget himſelf, and I ſaw the moment when
" he thought himſelf in reality the god whoſe
" image he repreſented.

" *By good luck* I had ſtill ſtrength enough
" left to be angry: the poor creature, ſhock-
" ed and confounded, took my emotion for
" anger, and loſt, in aſking my pardon, the
" moſt favourable moment to offend me with
" impunity." " Ah! Madam," cried the Abbé de Chateauneuf, " is it poſſible that
" I have been ſuch a fool!"—" How now?" reſumed the Marchioneſs. — " Alas! this
" little fool was I!"—" You! it is impoſ-
" ſible!" —" 'Twas I, I myſelf, nothing
" more certain. You recal my own ſtory to
" my remembrance. Cruel woman! had I
" known but what I now know!"—" My
" old friend, you would have had too great
" an advantage; and this prudence which
" you now extol ſo highly would have made
" but a feeble reſiſtance to you." " I am
" confounded," cried the Abbé; " I ſhall
" never

" never forgive myſelf as long as I live."
" Comfort yourſelf; it is full time," replied the Marchioneſs ſmiling; " but acknowledge " that there is often much *good luck* in virtue " itſelf, and that thoſe women, who have the " greateſt ſhare of it, ought to judge with " leſs rigour, than thoſe who have not enough " of it."

THE
TWO UNFORTUNATE LADIES.

THE Marchioneſs de Clarence had lately retired to the convent of the Viſitation de Cl.... The calmneſs and ſerenity, that ſhe ſaw reigning in this ſolitude, rendered more lively and bitter the grief that conſumed her. " What happineſs," ſaid ſhe, " do not " theſe innocent doves enjoy, who have taken " their flight towards heaven! Life is for them " a day without clouds: they neither know " the troubles nor the pleaſures of the " world."

Amongſt the pious virgins whoſe happineſs ſhe envied, one only, called *Lucilia*, appeared to her ſorrowful and languiſhing. Lucilia as yet,

yet, in the ſpring of her age, had this character of beauty, which is the image of a ſenſible heart; but grief and tears had faded its freſhneſs, as a roſe withered by the ſun, and which, tho' languiſhing, leaves one to judge of all the beauties that it enjoyed in the morning. It ſeems there is a dumb language between tender ſouls. The Marchioneſs read in the eyes of this afflicted fair one what no body had perceived there before. So natural is it to the unhappy to complain, and love their partners in affliction! She took a liking to Lucilia. Friendſhip, which in the world is hardly a ſentiment, in the cloiſters is a paſſion. Their connexion in a ſhort time became very intimate; but on both ſides a concealed ſorrow poiſoned its ſweetneſs. They were ſometimes a whole hour ſighing together, without preſuming to aſk of one another the ſecret of their griefs. The Marchioneſs at laſt broke the ſilence.

"A mutual confeſſion," ſaid ſhe, "would "ſpare us perhaps a great deal of uneaſineſs: "we ſtifle our ſighs on both ſides; ought "friendſhip to keep any thing a ſecret from "the breaſt where a mutual friendſhip is "found?" At theſe words a modeſt bluſh animated the features of Lucilia, and the veil of her eye lids was diſplayed over her fine eyes. "Ah! why," replied the Marchioneſs, "why "this bluſh? Is it the effect of ſhame? It is

"thus

" thus that the thought of happineſs ought to " colour beauty. Speak, my Lucilia; pour " out your heart into the boſom of a friend, " more, without doubt, to be lamented than " yourſelf, but who would conſole herſelf for " her own unhappineſs, if ſhe could but ſoften " yours."—" What is it you aſk of me, Ma- " dam? I ſhare all your ſorrows, but I have " none of my own to confide to you. The " alteration of my health is the only cauſe of " that languor into which you ſee me plunged. " I am decaying inſenſibly, and, thanks to " Heaven, my end approaches." She ſpoke theſe laſt words with a ſmile, at which the Marchioneſs was greatly affected. " Is that " then," ſaid ſhe, " your only conſolation? " Impatient to die, you will not confeſs to " me what it is that renders life odious to you. " How long have you been here?"—" Five " years, Madam." — " Was it compulſion " brought you hither?"—" No, Madam, it " was reaſon, it was Heaven itſelf which was " pleaſed to attract my heart entirely to it." —" That heart then was attached to the " world?"——" Alas! yes, for its own pu- " niſhment." — " Finiſh."—" I have told " you all."——" Were you in love, Lucilia, " and had the fortitude to bury yourſelf alive! " Was it ſome perfidious wretch whom you " have abandoned?"—" The moſt virtuous,

" moſt tender, and moſt valuable of man-
" kind. Aſk no more: you ſee the guilty
" tears that ſteal from my eyes; all the wounds
" of my heart are opened at the thought."—
" No, my dear Lucilia, it is not a time for
" us now to keep any thing a ſecret. I would
" penetrate into the inmoſt folds of your ſoul,
" in order to pour conſolation into them: be-
" lieve me, the poiſon of grief exhales not but
" by complaints; ſhut up in ſilence, it only
" becomes the more violent." — " You will
" have it, Madam? Weep then over the un-
" fortunate Lucilia, weep over her life, and
" ſhortly over her death.

" Scarce had I appeared in the world, when
" this fatal beauty attracted the eyes of a fickle
" and imprudent youth, whoſe homage could
" not dazzle me. One man alone, yet in
" the age of innocence and candour, taught
" me that I was ſenſible of love. The equa-
" lity of our years, birth, fortune, the con-
" nexion alſo between our families, and, above
" all, a mutual inclination, had united us to
" each other. My lover lived only for me:
" we ſaw with pity this immenſe void of the
" world, where pleaſure is only a ſhadow,
" where love is but a gleam: our hearts full
" of themſelves .... But I loſe myſelf. Ah!
" Madam, what do you now oblige me to
" call to mind!"——" What, my dear, do
" you

" you reproach yourſelf for having been juſt?
" When Heaven has formed two virtuous and
" ſenſible hearts, does it make it criminal in
" them to ſeek each other, to attract, to cap-
" tivate reciprocally? If ſo, why has it
" made them?" — " It formed, no doubt,
" with pleaſure that heart in which mine loſt
" itſelf; where virtue took place of reaſon,
" and where I ſaw nothing that was a re-
" proach to Nature. Oh! Madam, who was
" ever loved like me! Would you believe
" that I was obliged to ſpare my lover's deli-
" cacy even the confeſſion of thoſe tender
" inquietudes which ſometimes afflict love?
" He would have deprived himſelf of life,
" if Lucilia had been jealous of it. When
" he perceived in my eyes any mark of ſor-
" row, it was to him as if all Nature had
" been eclipſed: he ſuppoſed himſelf always
" the cauſe, and reproached himſelf for all
" my faults.

" It is but too eaſy to judge to what exceſs
" the moſt amiable of men muſt have been
" loved. Intereſt, which diſſolves all ties,
" except thoſe of love, intereſt diſunited our
" families: a fatal law-ſuit commenced againſt
" my mother was to us the æra and ſource of
" our misfortunes. The mutual hatred of
" our friends raiſed itſelf as an eternal barrier
" between us: we were obliged to give over

" ſeeing each other. The letter which he " wrote me will never be effaced out of my " memory.

" EVery thing is loſt to me, my dear Lu- " cilia: they tear from me my only hap- " pineſs. I am juſt come from throwing my- " ſelf at my father's feet, I am juſt come " from conjuring him, bathing him at the " ſame time with my tears, to give over this " fatal law-ſuit. He received me as a child. " I proteſted to him that your fortune was " ſacred to me, that my own would become " odious. He has treated my diſintereſted- " neſs as a folly. Mankind conceive not that " there is ſomething above riches: and yet " what ſhould I do with wealth if I loſe you? " They ſay that one day I ſhall be glad they " did not liſten to me. If I believed that " age, or what they call reaſon, could ſo far " debaſe my ſoul, I ſhould ceaſe to live from " this moment, terrified at what was to come. " No, my dear Lucilia, no; all I have or " aſk is yours. The laws would in vain give " me a part of your inheritance; my laws " are in my heart, and my father there ſtands " condemned. A thouſand pardons for the " uneaſineſſes he occaſions you. Pray God " that I offer up no criminal wiſhes! I could " cut off from my own days to add to my fa-

" the'rs;

" ther's; but if ever I am maſter of thoſe " riches he is now accumulating, and with " which he would overload me in ſpite of " myſelf, ample reparation ſhall be made for " all. But yet I am deprived of you. They " will diſpoſe, perhaps, of the heart which " you have given me. Ah! beware of ever " conſenting to it: think that my life is at " ſtake, think that our oaths are written in " heaven. But can you withſtand the impe- " rious will of a mother? I ſhudder at the " thought: ſpeak comfort to me, in the name " of the moſt tender love."

" You anſwered him, without doubt?"— " Yes. Madam, but in very few words.

" I Upbraid you with nothing. I am unhap- " py, but I know how to be ſo: learn " from me to ſuffer.

" The law-ſuit however was begun, and " carried on with heat. One day, alas! " one terrible day, while my mother was " reading with indignation a memorial pub- " liſhed againſt her, ſome body aſked to " ſpeak with me. " Who is it?" ſaid ſhe; " let them come in." The ſervant, con- " founded, heſitates for ſome time, ſtam- " mers in his anſwers, and ends by con-

" feſſing that he was charged with a billet to
" me. —— " For my daughter! and from
" whom?" I was preſent; judge of my ſitu-
" ation; judge of the indignation of my
" mother when ſhe heard named the ſon of
" the perſon whom ſhe called her perſecutor.
" If ſhe had vouchſafed to read the billet,
" which ſhe ſent back without opening, per-
" haps ſhe had been moved by it. She would
" have ſeen at leaſt, that nothing in the world
" was purer than our ſentiments: but whe-
" ther the vexation into which this law ſuit
" had plunged her, required only an oppor-
" tunity to vent itſelf, or that a ſecret corre-
" ſpondence between her daughter and her
" enemies was in her eyes a real crime, there
" are no reproaches with which I was not
" loaded. I fell down confounded at my
" mother's feet, and ſubmitted to the humi-
" liation of her upbraidings, as if I had de-
" ſerved them. It was determined on the ſpot
" that I ſhould go and conceal in a cloiſter
" what ſhe called my ſhame and her own.
" Being brought here the day after, orders
" were given not to ſuffer me to ſee any body;
" and I was there three whole months, as if
" my family and the world had been entirely
" annihilated to me. The firſt and only vi-
" ſit I received was my mother's: I preſaged
" from her embraces the ſentence ſhe was
" going

" going to pronounce. " I am ruined," ſaid " ſhe to me, as ſoon as we were alone: " ini- " quity has prevailed; I have loſt my law- " ſuit, and, with it, all means of eſtabliſh- " ing you in the world. Scarce enough re- " mains for my ſon to ſupport himſelf accor- " ding to his birth. As to you, my daugh- " ter, God has called you here; here you " muſt live and die: to-morrow you take the " veil." At theſe words, which were ſtrength- " ened by the cold and abſolute tone in which " they were pronounced, my heart was ſtruck, " and my tongue frozen; my knees gave way " beneath me, and I fell ſenſeleſs on the " ground. My mother called for aſſiſtance, " and laid hold of that opportunity to with- " draw herſelf from my tears. When I was " come to myſelf again, I found myſelf ſur- " rounded with thoſe pious damſels, whoſe " companion I was to be, and who invited " me to partake with them the ſweet tran- " quillity of their condition. But that ſtate, " ſo fortunate for an innocent and diſengaged " ſoul, preſented to my eyes nothing but " ſtruggles, perjuries, and remorſe. A dread- " ful abyſs was going to be opened betwixt " my lover and me; I found my better part " torn from me; I ſaw no longer any thing " around me but ſilence and vacuity; and in " this immenſe ſolitude, in this renunciation

" of

" of all nature, I found myſelf in the pre-
" ſence of Heaven, with my heart full of the
" lovely object, which it was neceſſary I
" ſhould forget for its ſake. Theſe holy dam-
" ſels told me, with the ſtrongeſt conviction,
" all that they knew of the vanities of the
" world; but it was not to the world that I
" was attached: the moſt horrible deſert would
" have been to me a raviſhing abode, with the
" man whom I had left in that world, which
" to me was nothing.

" I deſired to ſee my mother again: ſhe
" pretended at firſt to have taken my ſwoon-
" ing for a natural accident. " No, Madam,
" it is the effect of the violent ſituation into
" which you have thrown me; for it is no
" longer time to feign. You have given me
" life, you may take it from me; but, my
" mother, have you conceived me only as a
" victim devoted to the torment of a linger-
" ing death? And to whom is it you ſacri-
" fice me? It is not to God. I feel that he
" rejects me: the Almighty demands only
" victims that are pure, voluntary ſacrifices;
" he is jealous of the offerings that are made
" him, and the heart which preſents itſelf to
" him ought from thenceforward to be his
" alone. If violence brings me to the altar,
" perjury and ſacrilege attend me there." —
" What ſay you, wretched girl?"—" A ter-
" rible

" rible truth, which deſpair forces from me:
" yes, Madam, my heart has given itſelf
" away without your conſent; innocent or
" culpable, it is no longer mine; God only
" can break the band by which it is tied."—
" Go, unworthy daughter, go and ruin
" yourſelf: I know you no more."—" My
" mother, by your own blood, abandon me
" not; ſee my tears, my deſpair; ſee hell
" open at my feet."——" Is it in this light
" then that a fatal paſſion makes thee view
" the aſylum of honour, the tranquil port of
" innocence? What is there then but the
" world in thy eyes? Know, however, that
" this world has but one idol, intereſt. All
" our homages are for the ſucceſsful: obli-
" vion, deſertion, and contempt, are the
" portion of the unfortunate."

" Ah! Madam, ſeparate from that cor-
" rupt multitude the man . . . . ."—" Whom
" you love, is it not ſo? I know all that he
" can have ſaid to you. He is no accomplice
" in the iniquity of his father; he diſclaims
" it, he complains to you of it; he will re-
" pair the injury done you. Vain promiſes,
" the fine ſpeeches of a young man, which
" will be forgot to-morrow. But were he
" conſtant in his paſſion, and faithful in his
" promiſes, his father is young; he will
" grow old, for the wicked grow old; and

" in

" in the mean time love becomes extinct,
" ambition prompts, duty commands; rank,
" alliance, fortune, preſent themſelves to him,
" and the credulous, beguiled maid, becomes
" the public talk. Such is the lot that
" awaited you: your mother has preſerved
" you from it. I now coſt you ſome tears,
" but you will one day bleſs me for it. I
" leave you, my daughter: prepare yourſelf
" for the ſacrifice which God requires of you.
" The more painful this ſacrifice is, the more
" worthy alſo will it be of him."

" What ſhall I ſay to you, Madam? I
" was obliged to reſolve. I took this veil,
" this bandage; I entered into the path of
" penitence; and during the time of proba-
" tion, in which we are yet free, I flattered
" myſelf with the hopes of ſubduing myſelf,
" and I attributed my irreſolution and weak-
" neſs ſolely to the fatal liberty of having it
" in my power to return. I thought the time
" long till I could bind myſelf by an irrevo-
" cable oath. I took that oath: I renoun-
" ced the world: an eaſy matter. But, alas!
" I renounced alſo my lover, and that was to
" me more than renouncing my life. On
" pronouncing thoſe vows, my ſoul fluttered
" on my lips, as if ready to leave me. Scarce
" had I ſtrength enough to drag me to the
" foot of the altar: whence they were obliged

" to

" to carry me away as dead. My mother " came to me tranſported with a cruel joy. " Pardon me, my God; I reſpect, I love " her ſtill; I will love her to my laſt gaſp." Theſe words of Lucilia were interrupted by ſighs, and two rivulets of tears overflowed her face.

" The ſacrifice was now completed," reſumed ſhe after a long ſilence: " I was the " Almighty's, I was no longer my own. All " ſenſual ties were now to be broken: I was " become dead to the earth; I preſumed to " believe it. But what was my terrour, on " ſearching into the abyſs of my own ſoul! " I there ſtill found love, but a frantic and " criminal love, love covered with ſhame and " deſpair, love rebelling againſt Heaven, againſt " Nature, againſt myſelf; love conſumed by " regret, torn with remorſe, and transformed " into rage. " What have I done!" cried " I to myſelf a thouſand times; " what have " I done! This adored man, whom I muſt ſee " no more, preſents himſelf to my imagination " in all his charms." The happy knot which " was to have made us one, all the moments " of a delicious life, all the emotions of two " hearts which death alone would have ſepa- " rated, preſented themſelves to my diſtracted " ſoul. Ah! Madam, how grievous was the " image! There is nothing which I have not

" done

" done in order to blot it from my memory. " For theſe five years paſt have I by turns " baniſhed it from my ſight, and ſeen it recur " again without ceaſing. In vain do I ſink " myſelf in ſleep, which only revives it in " my mind; in vain do I abſtract myſelf in " ſolitude where it awaits me; I find it again " at the foot of the altar, I bear it into the " boſom of God himſelf. Mean time that " God, who abounds in clemency, has at " length taken pity of me. Time, reaſon, " penance, have weakened the firſt ſhocks of " this criminal paſſion: but a painful lan- " guor has taken their place. I feel myſelf " dying every moment, and the thought that " I am drawing near to my grave is the only " pleaſure I now enjoy."

" Oh! my dear Lucilia," cried the Marchioneſs, after hearing her, " which of us " is the moſt to be pitied! Love has been the " cauſe both of your misfortunes and mine: " but you loved the tendereſt, the moſt faith- " ful, the moſt grateful of men; and I the " moſt perfidious, the moſt ungrateful, the " moſt cruel that ever was. You devoted your- " ſelf to Heaven; I delivered myſelf up to a " villain: your retreat was a triumph; mine " is a reproach: people lament you, love you, " reſpect you; but me they revile and tra- " duce.

" Of

" Of all lovers, the moſt paſſionate before
" marriage was the Marquis of Clarence.
" Young, amiable, ſeducing to the higheſt
" degree, he promiſed a moſt happy diſpo-
" ſition. He ſeemed to poſſeſs all the virtues,
" as he had in reality all the graces. The
" docile eaſe of his temper received in ſo
" lively a manner the impreſſion of virtuous
" ſentiments, that they ſeemed as if they
" could never have been effaced. It was too
" eaſy for him, alas! to inſpire me with the
" paſſion which he had himſelf, or at leaſt
" thought he had for me. All the conve-
" niencies which make great matches, con-
" ſpired with this mutual inclination; and
" my parents, who had ſeen it riſing in my
" boſom, conſented to crown it. Two years
" paſſed in the tendereſt union. Oh Paris!
" Oh theatre of vices! Oh dreadful rock of
" love, of innocence, and of virtue! My
" huſband, who till then had been but little
" converſant with thoſe of his own age, and
" that merely to amuſe himſelf, as he ſaid,
" with their irregularities and follies, ſucked
" in inſenſibly the poiſon of their example.
" The noiſy preparation for their inſipid
" meetings, the myſterious confidence of their
" adventures, the proud recitals of their
" empty pleaſures, the commendations la-
" viſhed on their worthleſs conqueſts, at once

" excited his curioſity. The ſweetneſs of an " innocent and peaceful union had no longer " the ſame charms for him. I had myſelf no " other talents than thoſe which a virtuous " education beſtows ; I perceived that he " requried more in me. " I am undone," " ſaid I to myſelf ; " my heart is no longer " a ſufficient return for his." Indeed his at- " tentions from that time were nothing more " than complaiſance : he no longer preferred " for pleaſure thoſe ſweet converſations, thoſe " private interviews ſo delicious to me, to the " ebb and flow of a tumultuous ſociety. He " himſelf invited me to give myſelf up to diſ- " ſipation, only in order to authoriſe him to " be abandoned. I became more preſſing, I " reſtrained him. I took the reſolution of " leaving him at liberty, that he might wiſh " for me, and ſee me again with pleaſure, " after a compariſon which I thought muſt " be to my advantage ; but young corrupters " ſeized that ſoul, unfortunately too flexible; " and from the inſtant he had ſteeped his lips " in the poiſoned cup, his intoxication was " without remedy, and his wandering with- " out return. I wanted to recall him ; but it " was too late. " You deſtroy yourſelf, my " dear," ſaid I to him ; " and though it be " dreadful to me to ſee a huſband taken from " me who formed all my delight, yet it is

" more

" more for your ſake than my own that I la-
" ment your errour. You ſeek happineſs
" where it is moſt aſſuredly not to be found.
" Falſe delights, ſhameful pleaſures, will
" never ſatisfy your ſoul. The art of ſedu-
" cing and deceiving is all the art of the world
" that now charms you; your wife knows it
" not, and you know it no better than ſhe:
" that infamous ſchool is not formed for our
" hearts: yours ſuffers itſelf to be loſt in its
" intoxication; but it will laſt only for a
" time: the illuſion will diſſipate like the
" vapours of ſleep; you will return to me;
" you will find me ſtill the ſame; an indul-
" gent and faithful love waits your return:
" all will be forgotten. You will have nei-
" ther reproach nor complaint to fear from
" me. Happy if I can conſole you, for all
" the chagrins which you may have occa-
" ſioned me! But you, who know the va-
" lue of virtue, and have taſted of her charms;
" you, whom vice ſhall have plunged from
" one abyſs into another; you, whom it ſhall
" ſend back perhaps with contempt, to con-
" ceal at home with your wife the languiſh-
" ing days of a premature old age, your heart
" withered with ſadneſs, your ſoul a prey to
" cruel remorſe, how will you reconcile your-
" ſelf to yourſelf? how will you be able ſtill
" to reliſh the pure pleaſure of being beloved

" by me? Alas! my love itſelf will be your " puniſhment. The more lively alſo and ten- " der that love will be, the more humiliating " will it be for you. It is this, my dear Mar- " quis, it is this that grieves and overpowers " me. Ceaſe to love me, I conſent to it; I " can forgive you for it, ſince I have ceaſed " to be agreeable to you: but never render " yourſelf unworthy of my tenderneſs, and be " at leaſt ſuch, that you need not bluſh be- " fore me. Would you believe it, my dear " Lucilia? a piece of raillery was all his an- " ſwer. He told me that I talked like an " angel, and that what I had ſaid deſerved to " be committed to writing. But ſeeing my " eyes brimfull of tears, " Do not play the " child then," ſaid he to me; " I love you, " you know it; ſuffer me to amuſe myſelf at " large, and be aſſured that nothing attaches " me."

" However, ſome officious friends failed " not to inform me of every thing that could " grieve and confound me. Alas! my huſ- " band himſelf in a ſhort time deſiſted from " keeping himſelf under any reſtraint, and " even from flattering me.

" I ſhall not tell you, my dear Lucilia, " the many marks of humiliation and diſguſt " that I endured. Your griefs, in compa- " riſon of mine, would even appear light to

" you.

" you. Imagine, if it be poſſible, the ſitu-
" ation of a virtuous and warm ſoul, lively
" and delicate to exceſs, receiving every day
" new outrages from the only perſon it loves;
" that ſtill lives for him alone, when he lives
" no longer for her, when he is not aſhamed
" to live for objects devoted to contempt. I
" ſpare your delicacy the moſt horrible part
" of this picture. Rejected, abandoned, ſa-
" crificed by my huſband, I devoured my
" grief in ſilence; and if I was the object of
" the raillery of ſome companies devoid of
" morals, a more compaſſionate and more
" worthy public conſoled me with its pity.
" I enjoyed the ſole good which his vice could
" not take from me, a reputation without
" blemiſh. I have ſince loſt it, my dear Lu-
" cilia. The wickedneſs of the women, whom
" my example humbled, could not bear to
" ſee me irreproachable. They interpreted,
" as they thought proper, my ſolitude, and
" my apparent tranquillity: they gave me for
" a lover the firſt man who had the impu-
" dence to ſuffer himſelf to believe that he
" was well received by me. My huſband, to
" whom my preſence was a continual re-
" proach, and who found himſelf not yet ſuf-
" ficiently at liberty, in order to rid himſelf
" of my importunate grief, took the firſt pre-
" text that was preſented to him, and ba-

" niſhed me to one of his country-ſeats. Un-
" known to the world, far from the ſight of
" my misfortunes, I enjoyed at leaſt in my
" ſolitude the liberty of ſhedding tears; but
" the cruel man cauſed it to be notified to me,
" that I might chooſe a convent; that his ſeat
" of Florival was ſold, and that I muſt retire
" from thence." " Florival!" interrupted Lucilia, in a violent emotion. " That was the
" place of my exile," reſumed the Marchioneſs.—" Ah! Madam, what name have you
" pronounced!"——" The name which my
" huſband bore before he acquired the mar-
" quiſate of Clarence." " What do I hear!
" Oh, Heaven! Oh, juſt Heaven! is it poſ-
" ſible?" cried Lucilia, throwing herſelf upon the boſom of her friend.—" What is the
" matter! what troubles you! what ſud-
" den revolution! Lucilia, recover your ſen-
" ſes."—" How, Madam! Is Florival then
" the perfidious wretch, the villain, who be-
" trays and diſhonours you!"—" Do you
" know him?"—" It is the man, Madam,
" whom I adored, whom I have mourned
" for theſe five years paſt; the man who
" would have had my laſt ſighs!"—" What
" ſay you?"—" It is he, Madam; alas! what
" had been my lot!" At theſe words, Lucilia bowing her face to the ground, " Oh,
" my God!" ſaid ſhe, " Oh, my God! it

" was

" was thou who ſtretchedſt out thine hand " towards me." The Marchioneſs was confounded, and unable to recover from her aſtoniſhment. " Doubt it not," ſaid ſhe to Lucilia, " the deſigns of heaven are viſibly ma- " nifeſted upon us! it reunites us, it inſpires " us with a mutual confidence, it opens our " hearts to each other, as two ſources of light " and conſolation. Well, my worthy and " tender friend, let us endeavour to forget at " once both our misfortunes and the perſon " who occaſioned them."

From this time the tenderneſs and intimacy of their friendſhip increaſed to the higheſt degree: their ſolitude had for them pleaſures, " which are known only to the unfortunate. But, in a little time after this calm was interrupted by the news of the danger which threatened the days of the Marquis. His diſſipations coſt him his life. At the point of death he aſked for his virtuous wife. She tears herſelf from the arms of her forlorn companion; ſhe haſtens to him, ſhe arrives; ſhe finds him expiring. " Oh you, whom I have " ſo greatly and ſo cruelly injured," ſaid he to her on recollecting her, " ſee the fruit of my " irregularities; ſee the dreadful ſtroke which " the hand of God has inflicted upon me. If " I am yet worthy of your pity, raiſe up to " Heaven your innocent voice, and lay my

" remorſe

" remorſe before it." The diſtracted wife would have thrown herſelf on his boſom. " Stand off," ſaid he to her, " I ſhudder at " myſelf; my breath is the blaſt of death." He adds, after a long ſilence, " Do you know " me again in this ſtate to which my crimes " have reduced me? Is this that pure ſoul that " uſed to mix itſelf with thine? Is this that " half of thyſelf? Is this that nuptial bed that " received me when worthy of thee? Perfidi- " ous friends, deteſtable enchantreſſes, come, " ſee, and ſhudder. Oh, my ſoul! who will " deliver thee from this hideous priſon? Sir," ſaid he to his phyſician, " have I yet long to " live? My pains are intolerable. Leave me " not, my generous friend; I ſhould fall, " but for thee, into the moſt dreadful de- " ſpair .... Cruel death, complete, com- " plete the expiation of my life. There are " no evils which I do not deſerve; I have be- " trayed, diſhonoured, baſely perſecuted in- " nocence and virtue itſelf."

The Marchioneſs, in the agonies of her grief, made every moment new efforts to throw herſelf on the bed, from which they endeavoured to remove her. At laſt the unhappy man expired, his eyes fixed upon her, and his voice died away in aſking her pardon.

The only conſolation the Marchioneſs was capable of, aroſe from that religious confi-

dence

dence with which ſo good a death inſpired her. "He was," ſaid ſhe, "more weak than "wicked, and more frail than culpable. The "world had led him aſtray by its pleaſures. "God has brought him back again by afflic- "tions. He has chaſtiſed, and pardons him. "Yes, my huſband, my dear Clarence," cried ſhe, "now diſincumbered of the ties of "blood and the world, thou awaiteſt me in "the boſom of thy God."

Her ſoul full of theſe holy ideas, ſhe came and reunited herſelf to her friend, whom ſhe found at the foot of the altars. The heart of Lucilia was in the utmoſt anguiſh at the relation of this cruel and virtuous death. They mingled their tears for the laſt time; and ſoon after Madame de Clarence devoted to God, by the ſame vows as Lucilia, that heart, thoſe charms, thoſe virtues, of which the world was not worthy.

ALL OR NOTHING.

IN an age where it is ſo agreeable to be a widow, Cecilia was thinking of a new engagement. Two rivals were diſputing for her choice. The one modeſt and plain, loved none but her; the other cunning and vain, was above all *moſt conceitedly* fond of himſelf. The former had Cecilia's confidence; the latter her love. You are going to ſay, Cecilia was unjuſt: not at all. Plain people are careleſs: in order to pleaſe, they imagine that they do enough, if they love ſincerely, and if they perſuade perſons that they do love. But there are few diſpoſitions but what require a little embelliſhment. A man without art in the *beau monde* is like a woman in the play-houſe without *rouge*.

Eraſtus, with his uſual frankneſs, had ſaid to Cecilia, "I love you; and from that time he had loved her as if he had breathed nothing elſe: his love was his life. Floricourt had rendered himſelf agreeable by thoſe little gallantries which have the air of pretending to nothing. Among the attentions which he paid

to

to Cecilia, he choſe, not the moſt paſſionate, but the moſt ſeducing. Nothing affected, nothing grave: he appeared ſo much the more amiable, as he ſeemed to be ſo without intending it. She pitied Eraſtus: did not know an honeſter man: it was pity that it was impoſſible to love him. She dreaded Floricourt: he was a dangerous creature, and would perhaps be the ruin of a woman; but how was it poſſible to defend one's ſelf? However, ſhe would not deceive Eraſtus. She muſt confeſs the whole to him.

"I eſteem you, Eraſtus," ſaid Cecilia to him, "and I am ſenſible you merit more. "But the heart has its caprices; my own "diſſents from my reaſon. "I underſtand "you, Madam," replied Eraſtus, governing himſelf, but with tears in his eyes; "your "reaſon pleads to you for me, but your heart "for another."—"I confeſs it, and it is not "without regret: I ſhould be to blame, if I "were free; but the inclination knows no "rule."—"Very well, Madam; I will love "then alone; I ſhall derive the more glory "from it."—"But there is now the very "thing I would not have."—"Nor I neither; but that is to no purpoſe."—"And "what then is to become of you?"—"Whatever Love and Nature pleaſe."—"You "diſtreſs me, Eraſtus, by thus abandoning "yourſelf."

" yourſelf." — " I muſt ſurely abandon my-
" ſelf, when I am no longer able to prevent
" it."—" How unhappy am I in having ever
" known you !"——" Indeed I would have
" you complain: it is a terrible misfortune to
" be beloved !"—" Yes, it is a misfortune to
" have cauſe to reproach one's ſelf on account
" of a man we eſteem." —— " You, Ma-
" dam, you have nothing to reproach yourſelf
" with. An honeſt man may complain of a
" coquette who trifles with him; or rather,
" ſhe is unworthy of his complaints and his
" regret; but for you, what are the wrongs
" you have committed? Have you em-
" ployed any ſeducing arts to attract me to
" you, any complaiſance to retain me? Did
" I conſult you about loving you? Who
" obliges you to think me amiable? Follow
" your own inclination, and I will follow
" mine. Be not afraid that I ſhall plague
" you."—" No, but you will plague your-
" ſelf; for, in ſhort, you will ſee me."—
" What! would you be cruel enough to for-
" bid me your ſight?"—" Far from it, I aſ-
" ſure you; but I wiſh to ſee you eaſy, and
" as my beſt friend."—" Friend, let it be:
" the name ſignifies nothing."——" But the
" name is not enough; I would bring you
" back in reality to that ſentiment ſo pure,
" ſo tender, and ſo ſolid, to that friendſhip
" which

"which I feel for you."—"Well, Madam, "I hinder you not from loving me as you "pleaſe: pray now permit me to love you "as I can, and as much as I can. I aſk "only the liberty of being unhappy after my "own manner."

The obſtinacy of Eraſtus grieved Cecilia; but, after all, ſhe had done what was her duty: ſo much the worſe for him if he loved her ſtill. She gave herſelf up, therefore, without concern, and without reproach, to her inclination for Floricourt. All that the moſt refined gallantry has artful and enchanting in it, was put in practice to captivate her. Floricourt ſucceeded without difficulty. He knew how to pleaſe, he thought he loved; he was happy, if he had choſen to be ſo. But ſelf-love is the bane of love. It was but a ſmall thing in Floricourt's eyes to be loved more than all elſe; he wanted to be loved ſolely, without reſerve, and without participation. It is true that he ſet the example: he had detached himſelf for Cecilia from a prude whom he had ruined, and a coquette who ruined him; he had broke off with five or ſix of the vaineſt and fooliſheſt young fellows that had ever been ſeen in the world. He no longer ſupped any where but at Cecilia's, where it was delicious ſupping; and he had the goodneſs to think of her amidſt a circle of women, not one of whom

equalled her either in grace or beauty. Such uncommon proceedings, not to ſpeak of merit ſtill more uncommon, had not they a right to exact from Cecilia the moſt abſolute devotion?

In the mean time, as he was not ſufficiently in love to be at all deficient in addreſs, he took care not to ſuffer his pretenſions to appear at firſt. Never had man, before conqueſt, been more complaiſant, more docile, leſs aſſuming, than Floricourt; but from the moment he ſaw himſelf maſter of her heart, he became its tyrant. Difficult, imperious, jealous, he wanted to poſſeſs alone all the faculties of Cecilia's ſoul. He could not ſo much as permit her one idea except his own, much leſs a thought which came not from him. A deciſive taſte, a connexion kept up, was ſure to diſpleaſe him; but his meaning was obliged to be gueſſed at. He would force her to aſk him a hundred times over what he was thinking of, or what had put him out of humour; and it was never but as a favour that he confeſſed at laſt that ſuch a thing had diſpleaſed him, or ſuch a perſon made him dull. In ſhort, as ſoon as he ſaw that his will was a law, he declared it without ceremony; and it was ſubmitted to without oppoſition. It was but a ſmall matter to require of Cecilia the ſacrifice of thoſe pleaſures which naturally preſented themſelves; he gave birth to them the

oftener

oftener on purpoſe to ſee them ſacrificed to him. He ſpoke with tranſport of a play or an entertainment; he invited Cecilia to it; they ſettled the party with the women whom we had named; the hour came, they were dreſſed, the horſes put to; he changed his deſign, and Cecilia was obliged to pretend a headache. He preſented to her a ſhe friend, whom he introduced as an adorable woman: ſhe was found ſuch: an intimacy was contracted. A week after, he confeſſed he had been deceived; ſhe was affected, inſipid, or giddy; there was a neceſſity for breaking off with her.

Cecilia was in a ſhort time reduced to ſlight acquaintances, which ſhe yet ſaw too often. She perceives not that her complaiſance was changed into ſlavery. We think we purſue our own will when we purſue the will of thoſe we love. Floricourt ſeemed to her only to foreſtall her own deſires. She ſacrificed every thing to him, without ſo much as ſuſpecting that ſhe made him any ſacrifices; but Floricourt's ſelf-love was not ſatisfied.

The company of the town, perfectly frivolous and tranſitory as it was, yet appeared to him too intereſting. He extolled ſolitude, he repeated a hundred times, that there was no true love but in the country, far from diſſipation and noiſe, and that he ſhould never be happy but in a retreat inacceſſible to impertinents.

nents and rivals. Cecilia had juſt ſuch a country-houſe as he deſired. She had wiſhed to paſs there with him the fineſt part of the year; but could ſhe do it with decency? He gave her to underſtand, that it was ſufficient to take off all the air of a private party by taking ſuch a friend along with them as Eraſtus, and a woman of the character of Artenice. After all, if people ſhould talk, their marriage, which was ſoon to be concluded, would ſilence them. They ſet out, Eraſtus was of the party, and this again was a refinement of Floricourt's ſelf-love. He knew that Eraſtus was his rival, and his unſucceſsful rival: it was the moſt flattering teſtimony that he could have of his triumph; therefore he had contrived excellently to bring it about. His attentions for him had an air of compaſſion and ſuperiority, at which Eraſtus was ſometimes quite out of patience; but the tender and delicate friendſhip of Cecilia made him amends for theſe humiliations, and the fear of diſpleaſing her made him diſſemble them. However, ſure as he was that they were going into the country only in order to enjoy their love there at liberty, how could he reſolve with himſelf to follow them? This reflexion Cecilia made, as well as he: ſhe would have hindered him, but the party was ſettled, paſt breaking off. Beſides, Artenice was young

and

and handſome. Solitude, opportunity, liberty, example, jealouſy and deſpite, might engage Eraſtus to turn towards her thoſe vows which Cecilia could no longer liſten to. Cecilia was modeſt enough to think it poſſible for a perſon to be unfaithful to her, and juſt enough to deſire it; but it was betraying a very ſlight knowledge of the heart and character of Eraſtus.

Artenice was one of thoſe women with whom love is only an arrangement of ſociety, who are offended at a long reſpect, who grow tired of a conſtant paſſion, and who depend ſufficiently on the honeſty of the men to deliver themſelves up to them without reſerve, and to quit them without heſitation. They had told her, "We are going to paſs ſome "time in the country; Eraſtus is to be there; "will you make one." ? She replied with "a ſmile, "With all my heart; a pleaſant "ſcheme;" and the party was immediately ſettled. This was an additional torment to Eraſtus. Artenice had heard Cecilia praiſe her friend as the moſt prudent man in the world, the honeſteſt and the moſt reſerved. "That is charming," ſaid Artenice within herſelf; "there is a man whom one might "take and diſcharge without precaution, and "without noiſe. Happy or unhappy, that is "not to the purpoſe: one is never at one's

"eaſe but with people of this ſort. An "Eraſtus is a rarity." We may readily conclude, after theſe reflexions, that Eraſtus did not want for encouragement.

Floricourt behaved towards Cecilia with an aſſiduity perfectly diſtreſſing to an unſucceſsful rival. Cecilia in vain endeavoured to conſtrain herſelf; her looks, her voice, her very ſilence betrayed her. Eraſtus was upon the rack; but he concealed his pain. Artenice, like a dexterous woman, kept conveniently at a diſtance, and engaged Eraſtus to follow her. "How happy are they!" ſaid ſhe one day to him as they were walking together. "Wholely "taken up with each other, they feel a nu- "tual ſatisfaction, and live only for them- "ſelves. It is a great happineſs merely to love. "What ſay you to it?" "Yes, Madam," replied Eraſtus looking down: "it is a great "happineſs when two . . . ."—"Oh, there "are always two; for I do not ſee that one "is alone in the world."—"I mean, Ma- "dam, two hearts equally ſenſible, and made "to love one another equally."—"Equally! "that is very unreaſonable. For my part, I "think that we ought to be leſs difficult, and "to content ourſelves with coming up within "a ſmall matter of it. What then, if I have "more ſenſibility in my temper than he who "attaches himſelf to me, muſt I puniſh him

"for

"for it? Every one gives what he has, and "we have no room to reproach him who con- "tributes towards ſociety that portion of "feeling which he has received from nature. "I wonder that the coldeſt hearts are always "the moſt delicate. You, for example, you "now are a man that would expect one to "love you to diſtraction."—"I, Madam! I "expect nothing."—"You miſtake me; that "is not what I mean. You have enough in "you to ſeduce a woman, to be ſure. I "ſhould not even be ſurpriſed at her conceiv- "ing an inclination for you."—"That may "be, Madam; in point of folly, I doubt no- "thing; but if a woman were ſo fooliſh as to "fall in love with me, ſhe would, I think, "be much to be pitied."—"Is this is a cau- "tion, Sir, which you are ſo good as to give "me?"—"You, Madam? I flatter my- "ſelf that you think me neither fooliſh nor "weak enough to give you any ſuch cau- "tion."—"Very well, you ſpeak in gene- "ral then, and except me out of politeneſs?" —"The exception itſelf is unneceſſary, Ma- "dam; for you have nothing to do in the "caſe."—"Pardon me, Sir: it is I who tell "you, that you have qualities enough to "pleaſe, and that one might very eaſily love "you to diſtraction; and it is to me that you "reply, that one ſhould be very much to be

"pitied

" pitied if one loved you. Nothing, in my " opinion, can be more perſonal. Hey! " what, you are embarraſſed?"—" I con- " feſs that your raillery embarraſſes me; I " know not how to reply to it; but it is not " generous to attack me with weapons which " I am not armed with."—" But if I were in " earneſt, Eraſtus; if nothing in the world " were truer?"—" I quit the place, Madam: " the ſituation I am now reduced to will not " permit me to amuſe you any longer." " Ah! " upon my word he is in downright ear- " neſt," ſaid ſhe, following him with her eyes. " The tone of levity, the laughing air " which I aſſumed, have piqued him; he is a " man for ſentiment; we muſt talk to him in " his own language. To-morrow, in this " grove, one turn more, and my victory is " decided."

Eraſtus's walk with Artenice had appeared very long to Cecilia. Eraſtus returned from it quite penſive, and Artenice in triumph. " Well," ſaid Cecilia to her friend in a very low voice, " what do you think of Eraſtus?" —" Why I like him pretty well; he has not " quite wearied me, and that is a great deal: " he has ſome excellent qualities, and one " might make an agreeable man of him. I " find him only a little romantic in his man- " ner. He expects ſentiment; a fault of ha-

" bit,

" bit, a mere country-prejudice, of which " it is eaſy to break him." " *He expects ſen-* " *timent !*" ſaid Cecilia within herſelf ; " they " are coming to terms already ! This is go- " ing very far at one interview, I think " Eraſtus acts his part with a good grace. " Well ! but if he is happy, am I to take it " ill ? Yet it was wrong in him to want to " perſuade me that he was ſo greatly to be " pitied. He might have ſpared my delicacy " the heavy reproaches, which he knew very " well I heaped upon myſelf. It is the phrenſy " of lovers always to exaggerate their pains. " In ſhort, he is now conſoled, and I am " ſufficiently comforted."

Cecilia, in this idea, put leſs reſtraint on herſelf with regard to Floricourt. Eraſtus, whom nothing eſcaped, became more melancholy than uſual. Cecilia and Artenice attributed his melancholy to the ſame cauſe. A growing paſſion always produces that effect. The day after, Artenice did not fail to contrive a *tête á-tête* for Cecilia and Floricourt, by taking away Eraſtus along with her.

" You are angry," ſaid ſhe ; " and I want " to be reconciled to you. I ſee, Eraſtus, " that you are not one of thoſe men with " whom love is to be treated with raillery : " you look upon an engagement as one of the " moſt ſerious things in the world ; I like

" you

"you the better for it."—"I! Not at all, "Madam; I am too well perſuaded that a "ſerious paſſion is the higheſt extravagance, "and that love is no longer a pleaſure than "while it is a jeſt."—"Be conſiſtent then. "Yeſterday evening you required an equal "ſenſibility, a mutual inclination."—"I "required an impoſſibility, or, at leaſt, the "moſt uncommon thing in the world; and I "maintain, that without this union, which "is ſo difficult that it muſt be given up, the "wiſeſt and ſureſt way is to make a jeſt of "love, without annexing any chimerical va-"lue or importance to it."—"Upon my "word, my dear Eraſtus, you talk like an "angel. Indeed why ſhould we torment our-"ſelves to no purpoſe, endeavouring to love "more than we are able? We agree, ſettle "matters, grow weary of each other, and "part. On caſting up the account, we have "had pleaſure; the time, therefore, was well "employed, and would to heaven we could "be ſo amuſed all our lives!" "This now," ſaid Eraſtus within himſelf, "is a very con-"venient way of thinking!" "I well know," continued ſhe, "what they call a ſerious paſ-"ſion: nothing is more gloomy, nothing "more dull. Uneaſineſs, jealouſy, are con-"tinually tormenting the two unhappy crea-"tures. They pretend to be ſatisfied with

"each

" each other, and weary themſelves to death."
—" Ah! Madam, what is it you ſay? They
" want nothing, if they love truely. Such
" an union is the charm of life; the delight of
" the ſoul, the fullneſs of happineſs."—
" Really, Sir, you are mad with your eternal
" inconſiſtencies. What would you have
" then, pray?"—" What is not to be found,
" Madam, and what perhaps will never be
" ſeen."—" A fine expectation truely! And
" in the mean while your heart will continue
" diſengaged?"—" Alas! would to heaven
" it could!"—" It is not ſo then, Eraſtus?"
—" No certainly, Madam, and you would
" pity its condition, could you but conceive
" it. At theſe words he left her, lifting his
eyes towards heaven, and heaving a profound
ſigh. " This then," ſaid Artenice, " is what
" they call a reſerved man! He is ſo tho-
" roughly one, that it makes him a down-
" right beaſt. Happily, I have not explained
" myſelf. Poſſibly I ought to have ſpoken
" out to him: baſhful people muſt be aſ-
" ſiſted. But he walks off with an exclama-
" tion, without giving one time to aſk him
" what poſſeſſes or what afflicts him. We
" ſhall ſee? he muſt declare; for, in ſhort,
" I am come to a compromiſe, and my ho-
" nour is concerned."

Floricourt,

Floricourt, during ſupper, wanted to entertain himſelf at the expence of Eraſtus. "So!" ſaid he to Artenice, "Where have "you been? Nothing ſhould be concealed "from friends, and we ſet you the example." "Right," ſaid Artenice with indignation; "but did we know how to profit by the ex-"amples that are ſet us? Did we even know "what we would be at? If one talks of a "ſerious paſſion, the gentleman treats it as a "jeſt; if we agree to its being a jeſt, he goes "back again to the ſerious." "It is eaſy for "you, Madam," ſaid Eraſtus, "to turn me "into ridicule; I ſubmit to it, as much as "you pleaſe."—"How, Sir! I have no ſuch "deſign; but we are among friends, let us "explain ourſelves then without any myſtery. "We have not time to obſerve and gueſs at "each other. I pleaſe you; that you have "given to underſtand: I will not conceal "that you are agreeable enough to me. We "are not come here to be idle ſpectators: "honour itſelf requires that we ſhould be "employed: let us make an end, and un-"derſtand one another. How is it that you "would love me? How would you have me "love you?" "I, Madam!" cried Eraſtus; "I don't want you to love me."—"What "Sir, have you deceived me then?"—"Not "at all, Madam; I call heaven to witneſs

"that

" that I have not ſaid one word to you in the " leaſt like love." " Oh! for once," ſaid ſhe to him, getting up from table, " here is " a piece of effrontery beyond any thing I " ever ſaw." Floricourt would have detained her. " No, Sir, I am not able to endure the " ſight of a man who has the aſſurance to " deny the dull and inſipid declarations with " which he has affronted me, and which I " had the goodneſs to put up with, prepo- " ſeſſed by the commendations that had been " given me, I know not why, of this wretched " creature."

" Artenice is gone off in a rage," ſaid Cecilia to Eraſtus, on ſeeing him again the next day: " what is it that has paſſed between " you?"---" Some idle talk, Madam, the " reſult of which on my ſide was, that no- " thing is more to be dreaded than a ſerious " paſſion, and nothing more deſpicable than " a frivolous one. Artenice has ſeen me " ſigh; ſhe thought I ſighed for her. I have " undeceived her, and that is all."—" You " have undeceived her! that is handſome " enough; but you ſhould have done it with " a little more art!"—" How, Madam! " could ſhe dare to tell you that we were on " the brink of love, and would you have had " me refrain myſelf? What would you have " thought of my aſſent, or even of my ſilence?"

—" That you were reaſonable, and took the " right courſe. Artenice is yet young and " handſome, and your attachment would have " been nothing more than an amuſement."— " I am not in an humour to amuſe myſelf, " Madam, and I beg of you to ſpare the ad- " vice, by which I ſhall never profit."— " But you are now alone with us, and you " yourſelf muſt perceive that you will act but " a very ſtrange part here."—" I ſhall act, " Madam, the part of a friend: nothing is " more honourable, in my opinion."—" But, " Eraſtus, how will you be able to ſupport " it?"—" Leave that to me, Madam, and " do not make yourſelf in the leaſt uneaſy on " my account."—" I can't help being uneaſy; " for, in ſhort, I know your ſituation, and, " indeed, it is dreadful."—" May be ſo; " but it is neither in your power nor mine to " render it better: truſt me, and let us talk " no more of it."—" Talk no more of it! " Soon ſaid; but you are unhappy, and I " am the cauſe."—" Oh! no, Madam, no " I have told you ſo a hundred times; you " have nothing to reproach yourſelf with: in " God's name be eaſy."—" I ſhould be eaſy, " if you could but be ſo."—" Nay, now you " are cruel. Though you ſhould inſiſt upon " knowing what paſſes in my ſoul, yet I ſhould " not have one pang the leſs, but you would

" have

"have a piece of chagrin the more for it:
"prithee now forget that I love you." ——
"Hey! how! forget it? I ſee it every mo-
"ment."—"You would have me leave you
"then?"—"Why, our ſituation would re-
"quire it."—"Very well: drive me away
"then, that will be beſt."—"I drive you
"away, my friend! It is for you that I am
"in pain."—"Oh then, for my part I de-
"clare to you, that I cannot live without
"you."—"You think ſo; but abſence. . ."
"Abſence! a fine remedy for love like
"mine!"—"Doubt not its efficacy, my
"dear Eraſtus: there are women more ami-
"able and leſs unjuſt than I."—"I am glad
"of it; but that is all one to me."—"You
"think ſo at preſent."—"I am now what I
"ſhall be all my life long; I know myſelf:
"I know the women. Do not be afraid that
"any of them can make me either happy or
"unhappy."—"I can believe that you would
"not attach yourſelf at firſt; but you will diſ-
"ſipate yourſelf in the world."—"And with
"what? Nothing there amuſes me. Here
"at leaſt I have no time to grow dull: I ſee
"you, or I am going to ſee you; you talk to
"me kindly; I am ſure that you do not for-
"get me; and if I were at a diſtance from
"you, I have an imagination that would be
"my torment."—"And could it paint any

" thing more cruel to you than what you ſee ?"
—" I ſee nothing, Madam : I want to ſee
" nothing : ſpare me the uneaſineſs of being
" your confident."—" Indeed I admire your
" moderation."—" Yes, I have great merit
" truely in being moderate ! Would you have
" me beat you ?"—" No ; but people uſually
" complain on ſuch occaſions."—" And of
" what ?"—" I do not know ; but I cannot
" reconcile ſo much love with ſo much rea-
" ſon."—" Believe, Madam, every one loves
" after his own faſhion ; mine is not to rave.
" If ill language were neceſſary to pleaſe you,
" I could beſtow as much as another ; but I
" doubt whether that would ſucceed."—" I
" loſe nothing by that, Eraſtus ; and in the
" bottom of your heart."—" No, I vow
" to you that my heart reſpects you as much
" as my mouth. I never ſurpriſed myſelf one
" moment with the leaſt anger againſt you."
—" Yet you torment yourſelf, I ſee plainly.
" Melancholy gains upon you."—" I am not
" gay."—" You hardly eat."—" I live at
" leaſt."—" I am ſure you do not ſleep at
" all."—" Pardon me, I ſleep a little, and
" that is the happieſt part of my time ; for I
" ſee you in my ſlumbers ſuch almoſt as I wiſh
" you to be."—" Eraſtus !"—" Cecilia ?"—
" You offend me."—" 'Sdeath, Madam !
" it is too much to want to rob me of my
" dreams.

"dreams. In reality, you are ſuch as you "think proper; ſuffer me then at leaſt in "idea to have you ſuch as pleaſes me."——— "Do not be angry, but let us talk reaſon. "Theſe very dreams, which I ought not to "know of, nouriſh your paſſion."——"So "much the better, Madam, ſo much the "better: I ſhould be very ſorry to be cured "of it."—"And why do you perſiſt to love "me without hope?"—"Without hope! "I am not reduced to that yet: if your ſen- "timents were juſt, they would be durable. "But ..."—"Do not flatter yourſelf, Eraſtus; "I love, and for my whole life."—"I do "not flatter myſelf, Cecilia; it is you that "ſlander yourſelf. Your paſſion is a fever, "which will have its period. It is not gene- "rous to ſpeak ill of one's rival: I am ſilent; "but I refer it to the goodneſs of your diſpo- "ſition, to the delicacy of your heart."— "They are blind, both the one and the other." —"That is owning they are not ſo. One "muſt have ſeen or have had ſome glimmer- "ings, even to know that we ſee badly."— "Well, I confeſs it; I remember to have "diſcovered faults in Floricourt; but I know "nothing more in him."—"That know- "ledge will come to you, Madam, and on "that I depend."—"And if I marry Flori- "court, as indeed every thing tends that

" way . . ."—" In that caſe I ſhall have no-
" thing more either to hope or to fear, and
" my reſolution is already taken." — " And
" what is it ?"—" To give over loving you."
—" And how are you to do that ?"—" How ?
" 'Sdeath, nothing ſo eaſy. If I were in the
" army, and a ball . . ." — " O Heavens !"
" Is it ſo hard then to ſuppoſe one's ſelf in the
" army ?" — " Ah, my cruel friend, what
" is it you ſay? and with what levity do you
" tell me of a miſchief for which I ſhould ne-
" ver conſole myſelf !" Cecilia began to melt at this idea, when Floricourt came up to them. Eraſtus ſoon left them alone, according to his uſual practice. " Our friend,
" my dear Cecilia," ſaid Floricourt, " is a
" very gloomy mortal; what ſay you ?" " He
" is an honeſt creature," replied Cecilia,
" whoſe virtues I reſpect."—" Faith, with
" all his virtues he would do well to go and
" indulge his reveries ſomewhere elſe ; we
" want gaiety and company in the country."
—" Perhaps he has ſome reaſon to be pen-
" ſive and ſolitary."—" Yes, I believe ſo, and
" I gueſs it. You bluſh, Cecilia ! I ſhall be
" diſcreet, and your embarraſſment impoſes
" ſilence on me."—" And what ſhould be
" my embarraſſment, Sir ? You believe that
" Eraſtus loves me, and you have reaſon to
" believe it, I pity him, I adviſe him, I
" talk

"talk to him as his friend; there is nothing "in all this to bluſh at."—"Such a confeſ- "ſion, my beautiful Cecilia, renders you "ſtill more deſerving of eſteem; but allow "that it comes a little too late."—"I did "not think myſelf obliged, Sir, to inform "you of a ſecret which was not mine, and I "ſhould have concealed it from you all my "life long, if you had not ſurpriſed me into "the diſcovery. There is in theſe kinds of "confidences an oſtentation and a cruelty "which are not part of my diſpoſition. We "ſhould at leaſt reſpect thoſe whom we have "made unhappy."—"There is heroiſm for "you," cried Floricourt in a tone of anger and irony. "And does this friend whom you "uſe ſo well know how far matters are gone "between us?"—"Yes, Sir, I have told "him all."—"And he has ſtill the goodneſs "to ſtay here!"—"I endeavoured to diſ- "poſe him to leave us."—"Ah! I have no- "thing more to ſay; I ſhould have been ſur- "priſed if your delicacy had not fore-run "mine. You have perceived the indecency "of ſuffering a man who loves you to con- "tinue in your houſe, at the very moment in "which you are going to declare for his rival. "There would even be inhumanity in it to "render him a witneſs of the ſacrifice you "make me. And when is he to depart?"—

"I do

"I do not know: I have not had the courage "to prescribe the time to him; and he has "not the resolution to determine upon it." —"You rally, Cecilia: and who then is to "propose to him to rid us of his presence? "It would not be handsome in me." — "It "shall be I, Sir; do not be uneasy."—"And "what uneasiness, pray, Madam, do I show? "Would you do me the honour of supposing "me to be jealous? I assure you I am not "in the least: my delicacy has yourself only "in view, and for the little pain it may "give you . . . ."—"It will give me pain, "no doubt, to deprive a respectable friend of "the only consolation that is left him; but I "know how to do myself violence."—"Vio"lence, Madam! that is very strong. I "would have no violence; that would be "the way to render me odious, and I shall "therefore go myself, and persuade this re"spectable friend not to abandon you." —— "Go on, Sir; your raillery is mighty well "timed, and I deserve, indeed, that you "should talk to me in this manner.—"I "am very unhappy, Madam, to have dis"pleased you," said Floricourt, on seeing her eyes bedewed with tears. "Forgive me my "imprudence. I did not know all the con"cern you had for my rival and your friend."

At

At theſe words he left her, overcome with grief.

Eraſtus, at his return, found her in this ſituation. "What is the matter, Madam?" ſaid he, accoſting her: "your face bathed in "tears!"—"You ſee, Sir, the moſt wretched "of women: I am ſenſible that my weakneſs "will ruin me, and yet am unable to cure "myſelf. A man to whom I have ſacrificed "every thing, yet doubts of my ſentiments, "treats me with contempt, and ſuſpects me." —"I underſtand, Madam, he is jealous, "and muſt be made eaſy. Your own eaſe is "concerned in it, and there is nothing that I "would not ſacrifice to a concern ſo dear to "me. Adieu: may you be happy! and I "ſhall be the leſs wretched." Cecilia's tears burſt forth afreſh at theſe words. "I have "exhorted you to fly me," ſaid ſhe to him; "I adviſed you to it as a friend, and for your "own ſake. The effort I made over my own "ſoul had nothing humiliating in it; but to "baniſh you to gratify an unreaſonable man, "to rid him of a ſuſpicion which I ought ne-"ver to have feared; to be obliged to juſtify "my love by the ſacrifice of friendſhip, is "ſhameful and overwhelming. Never did "any thing coſt me ſo dear before."—"It "muſt be ſo, Madam, if you love Flori-"court."—"Yes, my dear Eraſtus, pity "me:

"me: I do love him, and it is in vain I re-
"proach myſelf for it." Eraſtus liſtened no longer, but went off.

Floricourt made uſe of every method to appeaſe Cecilia; his gentleneſs, his complaiſance, were not to be equalled, when his will was fulfilled. Eraſtus was almoſt forgot; and what is it we do not forget for the perſon we love, when we have the happineſs to believe ourſelves beloved again! One only amuſement, alas! and that a very innocent one, yet remained to Cecilia in their ſolitude. She had brought up a gold-finch, which, by a wonderful inſtinct, anſwered to her careſſes. He knew her voice, and would fly to meet her. He never ſung but when he ſaw her, he never eat but out of her hand, nor drank but out of her mouth: ſhe would give him his liberty, he would uſe it only for a minute, and as ſoon as ſhe called him, he cleaved the air with ſwiftneſs. No ſooner was he placed in her boſom, than a ſenſibility ſeemed to agitate his wings, and to precipitate the warblings of his melodious throat. Could one believe that the haughty Floricourt was offended at the attention which Cecilia paid to the ſenſibility and ſportiveneſs of this little animal?—"I will know," ſaid he one day within himſelf, "whether the love ſhe entertains for me "is ſuperiour to theſe weakneſſes. It would

"be

" be pleaſant indeed, if ſhe ſhould be more " attached to her gold-finch than to her lover. " That may be; I will make the experiment, " and that before the evening be over. And " where is the little bird?" ſaid he, accoſting her with a ſmile, " He is enjoying the open " air and liberty; he is ſomewhere fluttering " in the gardens."—" And are you not afraid " that at laſt he ſhould accuſtom himſelf to " that, and never return more?"—" I would " forgive him for it, if he found himſelf hap- " pier."—" Ah! prithee now let us ſee if " he be faithful to you. Will you pleaſe to " recal him?" Cecilia made the uſual ſignal, and the bird flew to her hand.—" That " is charming," ſays Floricourt; but he is " too dear to you, I am jealous of him, and " I would have all or nothing from the per- " ſon I love. At theſe words he wanted to lay hold of the dear little bird, in order to throttle it; ſhe ſet up a cry, the bird flew away; Cecilia, affrighted, grew pale, and loſt all ſenſation. The ſervants ran to her aſſiſtance, and recalled her to life. As ſoon as ſhe opened her eyes, ſhe ſaw at her feet, not the man whom ſhe loved beſt, but to her the moſt odious of mortals. " Go, Sir," ſaid ſhe with horrour: " this laſt action tells me " plainly your frightful character; it is as low " as it is cruel. Be gone from my houſe;

" never

"never return here. You are yet too happy, "that I reſpect myſelf more than I contemn "you. O my dear and worthy Eraſtus! to "whom ſhould I have ſacrificed you?" Floricourt went away fretting with ſhame and rage: the bird returned and careſſed his beautiful miſtreſs: it is needleſs to ſay that Eraſtus was recalled.

The PRETENDED PHILOSOPHER.

CLARISSA had for ſome years heard nothing talked of but philoſophers. "What "kind of mortals then are theſe?" ſaid ſhe: "I want much to ſee one." They tell her firſt, that true philoſophers were very rare, and not much addicted to communication; that as to the reſt, they were of all men the plaineſt, and had nothing ſingular in them. "There are then," ſaid ſhe, "two ſorts of "them; for in all the accounts that I hear, "a philoſopher is a fantaſtical being, who "pretends to be like nothing." Of thoſe, they told her, there are enough every where;

"you

" you ſhall have as many as you pleaſe of " them: nothing ſo eaſily contrived."

Clariſſa was in the country with one of thoſe parties, which are termed frivolous, and who ſeek only to amuſe themſelves. They preſented to her, a few days after, the ſententious Ariſtus. " The gentleman then is a " philoſopher?" ſaid ſhe on ſeeing him. " Yes, " Madam," replied Ariſtus." — " This phi- " loſophy is a fine thing, is it not?—" Why, " Madam, it is the knowledge of good and " evil, or, if you pleaſe, wiſdom." — " Is " that all?" ſaid Doris. " And the fruit of " this wiſdom," continued Clariſſa, " is to " be happy, no doubt?"—" Add, Madam, " to make others happy alſo." " I ſhould " be a philoſopher too then," ſaid the ſimple Lucinda in a low voice; " for I have been told " a hundred times, that it depended only on " me to be happy by making others happy." " Right! who don't know that?" reſumed Doris. " It is a mere ſtage-ſecret."

Ariſtus, with a ſmile of contempt, gave them to underſtand, that the philoſophical happineſs was not that which a pretty woman can taſte, and make others taſte.—" I doubted it " much," ſaid Clariſſa; " and nothing is " more unlike, I ſhould think, than a fine " woman and a philoſopher; but let us ſee " firſt how the ſage Ariſtus makes uſe of it,

" in order to be happy himſelf."—" That is " very ſimple, Madam: I have no prejudices, " I depend on no body, I live on little, I " love nothing, and I ſpeak every thing that " I think." " To love nothing," obſerved Cleon, " ſeems to me a diſpoſition but little fa- " vourable to make people happy." " How, " Sir!" replied the philoſopher; " what, do " we do good only to that we love? Do you " love the miſerable wretch whom you relieve " as you go along? It is juſt ſo that we diſtri- " bute to mankind the aſſiſtance of our lights." " And it is with your lights then," ſaid Doris, " that you make people happy?"—" Yes, " Madam, and that we are ſo ourſelves." The fat lady-preſident of Ponval thought this happineſs very ſlender! " Has a philoſo- " pher," demanded Lucinda, " many plea- " ſures?"—" He has but one, Madam, that " of deſpiſing them all."—" That muſt be " very entertaining," ſaid Mrs. Preſident roughly. " And if you love nothing, Sir, " what do you do with your ſoul?"—" What " do I do with it? I employ it to the only uſe " worthy of it. I contemplate, I obſerve " the wonders of Nature." " Ay, but what " can that Nature have intereſting to you," replied Clariſſa, " if mankind, if your equals " have nothing in them to attach you?" —— " My equals, Madam! I will not diſpute

" about

" about words: but that expreſſion is a little " too ſtrong. But however that be, Nature, " which I ſtudy, has to me the attraction of " curioſity, which is the ſpring of under- " ſtanding, as that which is called deſire is " the movement of ſentiment." " Oh, ay, " I conceive," ſaid Doris, " that curioſity " is ſomething; but do you reckon deſire, " Sir, as nothing?"—" Deſire, I have al- " ready told you, is an attraction of another " ſort."——" Why then deliver yourſelf up " to one of theſe attractions, while you re- " ſiſt the other?"—" Ah! Madam, becauſe " the enjoyments of the underſtanding are not " mingled with any bitterneſs, and all thoſe " of the ſenſes contain a concealed poiſon." " But at leaſt," demanded Cleon, " you have " ſenſes?"——" Yes, I have ſenſes, if you " pleaſe; but they have no rule over me: my " mind receives their impreſſions as a glaſs, " and nothing but the pure objects of the " underſtanding can affect it ſtrongly."—" A " very inſipid fellow this!" ſaid Doris to Cla- riſſa in a very low voice; " who brought this " ſtrange creature here?" " Peace," replied Clariſſa; " this is well calculated for the " country: there is a way to divert ourſelves " with him."

Cleon, who wanted ſtill to develop the cha- racter of Ariſtus, teſtified his ſurpriſe to him

of ſeeing him reſolved to love nothing; "for, "after all," ſaid he, "do you know nothing "amiable?"—"I know ſurfaces," replied the philoſopher; "but I know how to defy "the bottom."—"It remains then to know," ſaid Cleon, "whether this defiance be well "founded."—"Oh, very well founded, be- "lieve me; I have ſeen enough to convince "me that this globe is peopled only by fools, "knaves, and ingrates."—"If you were to "conſider it well," ſaid Clariſſa to him in a tone of reproach, "you would be leſs un- "juſt, and perhaps alſo more happy."

The ſage, confounded for a moment, pretended not to have heard. Word was brought that dinner was ready; he gave his hand to Clariſſa, and ſeated himſelf next her at table. "I would," ſaid ſhe to him, "reconcile you "to human nature."—"Impoſſible, Madam! "impoſſible: man is the moſt vicious of all "beings. What more cruel, for example, "than the ſpectacle of your dinner? How "many innocent animals are ſacrificed to the "voraciouſneſs of man? The ox, from which "you have this beef, what harm had he done "you? And the ſheep, from whence came "this mutton, the ſymbol of candour, what "right had you over his life? And this pigeon, "the ornament of our dove-houſes, juſt torn "from its tender mate? O Heavens! if there

"had

" had been a * *buffon* among the animals, in " what claſs would he place man? The tiger, " the vulture, the ſhark, would yield to him " the firſt rank among the voracious kinds." All the company concluded that the philoſopher ſubſiſted only on pulſe, and they were afraid to offer him any part of the meats which he had run over with ſo much compaſſion. " Help, help me," ſaid he: " ſince they have " gone ſo far as to kill them, ſomebody muſt " eat them." He declaimed, in like manner, at the ſame time that he eat of every thing, againſt the profuſion of victuals, the pains taken to procure them, the delicacy of them: " O happy time!" ſaid he, " when man " browzed with the goats. Some drink, pray? " Nature is greatly degenerated!" The philoſopher got drunk in deſcribing the clear brook where his forefathers uſed to quench their thirſt.

Cleon ſeized the moment when wine makes us ſay every thing, to diſcover the principle of this philoſophical ill-humour, which extended itſelf towards all mankind. " Well," ſaid he to Ariſtus, " you are here now among men; " do you find them ſo odious? Confeſs that " you condemned them on hearſay, and that " they do not deſerve all the harm that is ſaid " of them."—" On hearſay, Sir! Learn, that " a philoſopher judges not but after his own

* *Buffon*, the famous naturaliſt.

" notions: it is becauſe I have well conſidered,
" and well developed mankind, that I believe
" them vain, proud, and unjuſt." — " Ah!
" prithee now," interrupted Cleon, " ſpare
" us a little: our admiration of you, merits
" at leaſt ſome tenderneſs; for, in ſhort you
" cannot reproach us with not honouring
" merit."—" And how do you honour it?"
replied the philoſopher briſkly; " is it by neg-
" lect and deſertion that it is to be honoured?
" O! the philoſophers of Greece were the
" oracles of their age, the legiſlators of
" their country. Now a days wiſdom and
" virtue languiſh in oblivion; intrigue, mean-
" neſs, and ſervility, carry all before them."
" Suppoſe that were the caſe," ſaid Cleon,
" it would poſſibly be the fault of thoſe great
" men who diſdain to ſhow themſelves."
—" And would you have them then run
" their heads into the faces, or rather throw
" themſelves at the feet of the diſpenſers of
" rewards?" " It is true," ſaid Cleon, that
" they might ſpare themſelves the trouble,
" and that ſuch a perſon as yourſelf (pardon
" my bringing up your name) . . ."—" No
" harm done," replied the philoſopher with
great humility.—" Such a perſon as your-
" ſelf ought to be diſpenſed from paying his
" court."—" I pay my court! Ah! let them
" wait for that; I believe their pride would
" never

" never have much to plume itſelf upon: I " know how to ſet a right value on myſelf, " thank Heaven, and I would go and live in " the deſerts rather than diſgrace my being." " It would be great pity," ſaid Cleon, " that " ſociety ſhould loſe you: born to enlighten " mankind, you ought to live amongſt them. " You cannot think, ladies, the good that a " philoſopher does to the world: I will lay a " wager now, that this gentleman has diſco- " vered a multitude of moral truths, and that " there are perhaps at this very time fifty vir- " tues of his own making."—" Virtues!" replied Ariſtus, looking down, " I have not " ſtruck out many of them, but I have un- " veiled many vices."—" How, Sir!" ſaid Lucinda to him, " why did not you leave " them their veil? They would have been leſs " ugly."—" Your humble ſervant for that," replied Madam de Ponval: " I love an ac- " knowledged vice better than an equivocal " virtue: one knows at leaſt what to depend " on."—" And yet ſee how they requite us!" cried Ariſtus with indignation. " It is on " this account that I have taken the reſolu- " tion to live only for myſelf: let the world " go on as it may." — " No," ſaid Clariſſa politely to him, getting up from table, " I muſt " have you live for us. Have you any urgent " buſineſs at Paris?"—" None, Madam: a " philoſopher

" philoſopher has no buſineſs."——" Well, " then, I ſhall keep you here. The country " ſhould be agreeable to philoſophy, and I " promiſe you ſolitude, repoſe, and freedom." " Freedom, Madam!" ſaid the philoſopher, in an articulate voice, " I am greatly afraid " you will fail in your promiſe."

The company diſperſed to walk, and Ariſtus, with a thoughtful air, pretended to go and meditate in a walk, where he muſed without thinking of any thing. " I " miſtake," he thought of Clariſſa, and ſaid within himſelf, " A handſome woman, a " good houſe, all the conveniences of life; " that promiſes well! let us ſee the end. " It muſt be confeſſed," continued he, " that ſociety is a pleaſant ſcene: if I were " gallant now, forward, complaiſant, a- " miable, they would ſcarce pay any at- " tention to me: they ſee nothing elſe in " the world, and the vanity of women " is ſurfeited with theſe common homages; " but to tame a bear, to civiliſe a phi- " loſopher, to bend his pride, to ſoften " his ſoul, is a triumph difficult and un- " common, with which their ſelf love is " not a little flattered. Clariſſa, of her own " accord, ruſhes into my toils; let us wait " her there, without coming to any compro- " miſe."

The

The company on their ſide amuſed themſelves at the expence of Ariſtus. "He is a "pleaſant original enough," ſaid Doris: "what ſhall we ſtrike out of him?" "A "comedy," replied Cleon, "and if Clariſſa "will come into it, my plan is already ſettled." He communicated his thought, all the company applauded it, and Clariſſa, after ſome difficulty, conſented to play her part. She was much younger and handſomer than was neceſſary to move a philoſopher, and ſome words, ſome looks which had eſcaped our ſage, ſeemed to promiſe an excellent cataſtrophe. She threw herſelf, therefore, as it were by chance, into the ſame walk with Ariſtus. "I "put you out of your way," ſaid ſhe to him; "excuſe me, I was only paſſing."—"You "do not interrupt me, Madam, I can medi-"tate with you."—"You will do me plea-"ſure," ſays Clariſſa: "I perceive that a phi-"loſopher does not think like another man, "and I ſhould be very glad to ſee things with "your eyes."—"It is true, Madam, that "philoſophy creates, as it were, a new world. "The vulgar ſee only in the groſs: the de-"tails of Nature are a ſpectacle reſerved for "us: it is for us that ſhe ſeems to have diſ-"poſed with an art ſo wonderful, the fibres "of theſe leaves, the ſtamina of theſe flowers, "the texture of this rind: an ant hill is to

"me

" me a republic, and each of the atoms that " compoſe the world, appear in my eyes a new " world."—" That is admirable!" ſaid Clariſſa, " what was it that took up your thoughts " this moment?" — " Theſe birds," replied the ſage.—" They are happy, are they not?" —" Ah! very happy, without doubt; and " can they be otherwiſe? Independence, equa- " lity, few wants, ready pleaſures, oblivion " of the paſſed, no concern for the future, and " their whole ſolicitude to ſupport life, and " to perpetuate their ſpecies; what leſſons, " Madam, what leſſons for mankind!" —" Confeſs then, that the country is a deli- " cious abode; for, in ſhort, it brings us " nearer to the condition of animals, and like " them we ſeem to have no laws there, but " the gentle inſtinct of Nature."—" Ah! " Madam, how true is all this! but the im- " preſſion is effaced from the heart of man: " ſociety has ruined every thing."—" You are " right: this ſociety is ſomething very trouble- " ſome, and ſince we want nobody, it would be " quite natural to live for one's ſelf."—" Alas! " this is what I have ſaid a hundred times, " and what I never ceaſe to write; but nobody " will liſten to me: you, Madam, for example, " who ſeem to acknowledge the truth of this " principle, could you have the ſtrength to " practiſe it?"—" I cannot but wiſh," ſaid Clariſſa,

Clariſſa, " that philoſophy ſhould come in " faſhion: I ſhould not be the laſt to come " into it, as I ought not to be the firſt to ſet " it." — " This is the language that every " one ſpeaks; nobody will venture to ſet " the example, and, in the mean time, hu- " man nature groans, loaded with the yoke " of opinion, and the chains of cuſtom." —" What would you have us do, Sir? Our " eaſe, our honour, all that we hold dear, " depends on decorums "—" Well, Madam, " obſerve then theſe tyrannical decorums; wear " virtues as you do habits, made to the taſte of " the age; but your ſoul is your own: ſociety " has no right but to externals, and you owe " it only appearances. The decorums, concern- " ing which they make ſuch a noiſe, are them- " ſelves nothing more than appearances well " preſerved: but the interiour, Madam, the " interiour is the ſanctuary of the will, and " the will is independent." " I conceive," ſaid Clariſſa, " that I may wiſh for what I pleaſe, " provided I go no further." " True, without " doubt," replied the philoſopher, " it is better " to ſtop there than to run the hazard of giv- " ing into imprudencies; for, Madam, do you " know what a vicious woman is? It is a wo- " man who has no regard, no reſpect to her- " ſelf, in any caſe."—" What, Sir," demanded Clariſſa, affecting an air of ſatisfaction, " does

" vice

" vice then conſiſt only in imprudence?" " Be-
" fore I anſwer you, Madam, permit me to aſk
" you, what is vice in your eyes? Is it not that
" which overturns order, which hurts, or which
" may hurt?"—" The very thing."—" Very
" well, Madam, all that is external. Why then
" ſubmit your ſentiments and your thoughts
" to prejudice? See in theſe birds that ſoft and
" unreſtrained liberty which Nature gave you,
" and which you have loſt."—" Ah!" ſaid Cla-
riſſa with a ſigh, " the death of my huſband
" had reſtored me this precious gift; but I am
" on the point of renouncing it again." " O
" Heaven! what do I hear!" cried he; " are
" you going to form a new chain?"—" Why,
" I do not know."—" You do not know!"
—" They will have it ſo."—" And who, Ma-
" dam? who are the enemies who dare propoſe
" it to you? No; believe me, marriage is a
" yoke, and freedom is the ſupreme good.
" But, however, who is the huſband whom
" they would give you?"——" Cleon."—
" Cleon, Madam! I am no longer ſurpriſed
" at the unconſtrained air he aſſumes here.
" He queſtions, decides, condeſcends ſome-
" times to be affable, and has that advan-
" tageous politeneſs which ſeems to let himſelf
" down to a level with us; it is plain that he
" is doing the honours of his own houſe,
" and I know, from henceforth, the reſpect

" and

" and deference that I owe him." — " You " owe to each other a mutual civility, and I " intend that with me every body ſhall be on " an equality."—" You intend it, Clariſſa! " Alas! your choice deſtroys all equality " between mankind, and the perſon who is " to poſſeſs you.... Let us talk no more of " it, I have ſaid too much already, this place " is not made for a philoſopher. Permit me to " leave it." " No," ſaid ſhe to him, " I have " need of you, and you plunge me into irreſolu- " tions, from which you alone can draw me. It " muſt be confeſſed, that philoſophy is a very " comfortable thing; but if a philoſopher were " a deceiver, he would be a very dangerous " friend! Adieu, I would not have them ſee us " together: I am going to rejoin the company: " come to us ſoon. See there then," ſaid ſhe, as ſhe was going from him, " what they call " a philoſopher!" " Courage," ſaid he on his ſide, " Cleon hangs only by a thread." Clariſſa, with bluſhes, gave an account of the firſt ſcene, and her beginning was received with applauſe: but the Lady preſident, knitting her brow, " Do you intend," ſaid ſhe, " that I ſhould " be only a looker-on? No, no, I muſt play " my part, and I aſſure you, it ſhall be plea- " ſant. Do you think that you ſhall ſubdue this " ſage? No: I will have the honour of it." " You, Madam!"—" Oh! you may laugh:

" my fifty years, my triple chin, and my muſ-
" tachios of Spaniſh ſnuff defy all your graces."
The whole company applauded this challenge by redoubled peals of laughter. " Nothing is
" more ſerious," reſumed ſhe, " and if it be
" not enough to triumph over one, you have
" only to join, and diſpute the conqueſt with
" me; I defy you all three. Go, divine Doris,
" charming Lucinda, admirable Clariſſa, go
" and diſplay before his eyes all that coquetry
" and beauty have ſeducing in them; I laugh
" at it." She ſpoke theſe words with a tone of reſolution ſufficient to make her rivals tremble.

Cleon affected to appear dull and penſive at the arrival of Ariſtus, and Clariſſa aſſumed with the philoſopher a reſerved air of myſtery. They ſpake little, but ogled much. Ariſtus, on retiring to his apartment, found it furniſhed with all the inventions of luxury. " Oh
" Heavens!" ſaid he to the company, who for the ſake of diverting themſelves had conducted him there, " O Heavens! is it not ridiculous
" that all this preparation ſhould be made for
" one man's ſleep? Was it thus that they
" ſlept at Lacedæmon? O Lycurgus! what
" wouldſt thou ſay? A toilette for me! This
" is downright mockery. Do they take me for
" a Sybarite? I muſt retire, I cannot ſtand
" it."—" Would you have us," ſaid Clariſſa,
" unfurniſh it on purpoſe for you? Take my
" advice,

" advice, and enjoy the pleaſures of life, " when they preſent themſelves: a philoſo- " pher ſhould know how to put up with every " thing, and accommodate himſelf to every " thing."—" Very well, Madam," ſaid he ſomewhat appeaſed, " I muſt at preſent com- " ply with you; but I ſhall never be able to " ſleep on this heap of down. Upon my " word," ſays he, as he laid himſelf down, " this luxury is a fine thing!" and the philo- ſopher fell aſleep.

His dreams recalled to his remembrance his converſation with Clariſſa, and he awoke again in the pleaſing idea, that this virtue by convention, which is called prudence in women, would make but a feeble reſiſtance againſt him.

He was not yet up, when a lacquey came to propoſe the bath to him. The bath was a good preſage. " Be it ſo," ſaid he, " I will bathe: " The bath is a natural inſtitution. As for " perfumes, the earth yields them; let us " not diſdain her preſents." He would fain have made uſe of the toilette which they had provided for him; but ſhame reſtrained him. He contented himſelf with giving to his philo- ſophical negligence the moſt decent air he could, and the glaſs was twenty times conſult- ed. " What a fright you have made yourſelf!" ſaid Clariſſa to him on ſeeing him appear:

" why not dreſſed like the reſt of the world?
" This habit, this wig, give you a vul-
" gar air which you have not naturally."
—" What! Madam, is it by the air that we
" are to judge of mankind? Would you have
" me ſubmit to the caprices of faſhion, and be
" dreſſed like your Cleons?"—" Why not,
" Sir? Do you not know that they derive an
" advantage from your ſimplicity, and that
" it is this in particular, that leſſens in people's
" opinions the conſideration due to you? I
" myſelf, in order to do you juſtice, have
" need of my reflection: the firſt ſight makes
" againſt you, and it is very often the firſt
" ſight that decides. Why not give to virtue
" all the charms of which ſhe is capable?"—
" No, Madam, art is not made for her. The
" more naked, the more bautiful; they diſ-
" guiſe her when they endeavour to adorn
" her."—" Very well, Sir, let her contem-
" plate herſelf alone at her eaſe; as for me,
" I declare, that this ruſtic and low air diſ-
" pleaſes me. Is it not ſtrange, that having
" received from Nature a diſtinguiſhed figure,
" any one ſhould take a pride in degrading it?"
—" But Madam, what would you ſay, if a
" philoſopher ſhould employ his attention
" about his dreſs, and ſet himſelf off like your
" marquis?"—" I would ſay, he ſeeks to
" pleaſe, and he does right; for do not flatter
" *yourſelf,*

" yourſelf, Ariſtus, there is no pleaſing with-
" out taking a good deal of pains."—" Ah!
" I deſire nothing ſo much as to ſucceed in
" that in your eyes."—" If ſuch a deſire really
" poſſeſſes you," replied Clariſſa, with a ten-
der look, " beſtow at leaſt a quarter of an
" hour upon it. Here, Jaſmin, Jaſmin!
" go, dreſs the gentleman's head." Ariſtus
bluſhing, yields at length to theſe gentle in-
ſtances; and now behold the ſage at his toi-
lette!

The nimble hand of Jaſmin diſpoſes his locks with art; his phyſiognomy now diſplays itſelf; he admires the metamorphoſis, and is ſcarce able to conceive it. " What will they
" ſay on ſeeing me?" ſaid he to himſelf: " let
" them ſay what they pleaſe; but the philo-
" ſopher has a good face." He preſents himſelf blown up with pride, but with an aukward and baſhful air. " Ay, now for once," ſaid Clariſſa,
" you look handſome. There is nothing now
" but the colour of thoſe cloaths that offends
" my eyes."—" Ah! Madam, in the name of
" my glory, leave me at leaſt this character-
" iſtic of the gravity of my condition."——
" And what then, by your leave, is this chi-
" merical condition which you have ſo much
" at heart? I approve very much of people's
" being wiſe; but in my opinion all ſorts of
" colours are indifferent to wiſdom. Is this

" cheſnut of Mr. Guillaume more founded in " nature than the ſky-blue or roſe-colour? By " what caprice is it that you imitate in your " garments the huſk of the cheſnut rather " than the leaf of the roſe, or the tuft of the " lily with which the ſpring is crowned? " Ah! for my part, I confeſs to you that the " roſe-colour charms my ſight: that colour " has ſomething, I know not what, of ſoftneſs " in it, which goes to my very ſoul, and I " ſhould think you the handſomeſt creature " living in a ſuit of roſe-colour."—" Roſe- " colour, Madam! O Heavens! a philoſo- " pher in roſe colour!"—" Yes, Sir, a very " roſe-colour: what would you have? It is " my weakneſs. By writing to Paris directly, " you may have it by to morrow afternoon, can " you not?"—" What, Madam?"—" A ſuit " for the country of the colour of my ribands." —" No, Madam, it is impoſſible."—" Par- " don me, nothing is eaſier, the workmen need " only be up all night." — " Alas! it is of " mighty conſequence what the time is which " they are to employ in rendering me ridicu- " lous! Conſider, I beſeech you, that ſuch " an extravagance as this would ruin my repu- " tation."—" Well, Sir, when you ſhall " have loſt that reputation, you will gain an- " other, and it is odds that you will gain by " the exchange."—" I proteſt to you, Ma-

" dam,

" dam, that it is ſhocking to me to diſpleaſe " you, but . . ."—" But you put me out of " all patience; I do not love to be thwarted. " It is very ſtrange," continued ſhe in a tone of diſpleaſure, " that you ſhould refuſe me a " trifle. The importance you give it teaches " me to take care of myſelf in matters that are more ſerious." At theſe words ſhe quitted the room, leaving the philoſopher confounded that ſo trifling an incident ſhould deſtroy his hopes. " Roſe-colour!" ſaid he, " roſe-colour! how ridiculous! what a con- " traſt! ſhe will have it ſo, I muſt ſubmit:" and the philoſopher writ for the cloaths.

" You are obeyed, Madam," ſaid he to Clariſſa, accoſting her. " Has it coſt you much?" demanded ſhe with a ſmile of diſdain.—" A " great deal, Madam, and more than I can ex- " preſs; but, in ſhort, you would have it " ſo." All the company admired the philoſopher's head. Madam Preſident, above all, ſwore by the great gods, that ſhe had never ſeen any man's head better dreſſed before. Ariſtus thanked her for ſo flattering a compliment. " Compliments!" reſumed ſhe, " com- " pliments! I never make any. They are the " falſe coin of the world."—" Nothing was " ever better conceived," cried the ſage: " that deſerves to be ſet down in writing." They perceived that Madam Preſident was now beginning

beginning the attack, and they left them at full liberty. "You think then," ſaid ſhe to "him, "that nobody but yourſelf can make "ſentences? I am a philoſopher too, ſuch as "you ſee me." — "You, Madam! and of "what ſect? A Stoick, or an Epicurean?" — "Oh! take my word for it, the name is no- "thing. I have ten thouſand crowns a year, "which I ſpend with gaiety; I have good "champagne which I drink with my friends; "I enjoy a good ſtate of health; I do "what I pleaſe, and leave every one to "live after their own manner. There's a "ſect for you!" — "It is well done, and "exactly what Epicurus taught." — "Oh! I "declare to you I was taught nothing: all "this comes of my own ſelf. For theſe twen- "ty years I have read nothing but the liſt of "my wines and the bill of fare of my ſup- "per." — "Why, upon that footing you "muſt be the happieſt woman in the world." — "Happy! not entirely ſo: I want a huſ- "band of my own way of thinking. My pre- "ſident was a beaſt; good for nothing but "the bar: he underſtood the laws, and "that was all. I want a man who knows "how to love me, and who would employ "himſelf about me alone." — "You may find "a thouſand, Madam." — "Oh, I want but "one; but I would have him be a good one.

"Birth,

" Birth, fortune, all that is perfectly indif-
" ferent to me; I attach myſelf only to the
" man."—" Indeed, Madam, you aſtoniſh
" me: you are the firſt woman in whom I
" have found any principles; but is it preciſely
" a huſband that you want?" —— " Yes,
" Sir, a huſband who ſhall be mine in all the
" forms. Theſe lovers are all rogues, who
" deceive us, and who forſake us without
" leaving us room to complain: whereas a
" huſband is ours in the face of the world;
" and if mine ſhould deſert me, I ſhould like
" to be able to go, with my title in my hand,
" and in all honour and honeſty give a hund-
" red ſlaps on the face to the inſolent huſſy,
" that ſhould have taken him from me."—
" Very good, Madam, very good! the right
" of property is an inviolable right. But do
" you know that there are very few ſouls like
" yours? What courage, what vigour!" —
" Oh, I have as much as a lioneſs. I know
" I am not handſome; but ten thouſand
" crowns a year, made over on the wedding-
" day, are worth all the prettineſſes of a Lu-
" cinda or Clariſſa; and though love be rare
" in this age, one ought to have it for ten
" thouſand crowns." This converſation brought them back again to the houſe, at the very inſtant that word came that ſupper was ready.

Ariſtus appeared plunged in ſerious reflex-

ions;

ions; he weighed the advantages and inconveniences that might attend his marrying Madam the Preſident, and calculated how much longer a woman of fifty could live, ſwallowing every evening a bottle of champagne. A diſpute which aroſe between Madam de Ponval and Clariſſa, drew him out of his reverie. Doris gave riſe to the diſpute. "Is it poſſible," ſaid ſhe, "that Madam Preſident ſhould have "been able to ſupport for a whole hour a *tete* "*a tete* with a philoſopher, ſhe who falls a "yawning the moment one talks to her of rea-"ſon!"—"Truely," replied Madam de Ponval, "it is becauſe your reaſon has not com-"mon ſenſe: aſk this wiſe man here if mine "be not good. We talked of the ſtate that "ſuits an honeſt woman, and he agrees with "me, that a good huſband is by much the "beſt."—"Oh fie! cried Clariſſa, "are we "made to be ſlaves? And what becomes then "of that freedom, which is the firſt of all "goods?" Cleon declaimed againſt this ſyſtem of freedom; he maintained, that the union of hearts was very different from a ſtate of ſlavery. Madam Preſident ſupported this opinion, and declared that ſhe could perceive no diſtinction between the love of freedom, and the love of libertiniſm. "May this glaſs of "wine," ſaid ſhe, "be the laſt I ſhall drink, "if I ever form the leaſt dependence on any "man-

" man who ſhall not have firſt taken an oath " that he will be only mine. All the reſt is " but froth." " And there now," ſaid Clariſſa, " is the great mortification of marriage. Love " with its freedoms loſes all its delicacy. Is it " not ſo, Sir?" demanded ſhe of the philoſopher. —" Why, Madam, I have thought as you do; " yet it muſt be confeſſed that if freedom has its " charms, it has alſo its dangers, its rocks; " happy diſpoſitions are ſo great a good, and " inconſtancy is ſo natural to man, that the " the moment he feels a laudable inclination, " he acts prudently in depriving himſelf of the " fatal power of changing."—" Do you hear " him, ladies? Theſe men for my money! " no flattery! this is what is called a philoſo- " pher. Try to ſeduce him if you can: for " my part I retire quite charmed. Adieu, phi- " loſopher, I want reſt; I did not ſhut my eyes " all laſt night, and I long to be aſleep, in order " to have the pleaſure of dreaming." She ac- companied this adieu with an amorous glance, twinkling with champagne. " Ladies," ſaid Lucinda, " did you mind that look?" " Surely" replied Doris, " ſhe is diſtracted for Ariſtus; " that is clear,"—" For me, Madam! you " do not think ſo; our taſtes, I believe, and " our tempers are not made for each other. I " drink little, I ſwear ſtill leſs, and I do not " love to be confined."—" Ah! Sir, ten thou- " ſand crowns a year!"—" Ten thouſand

" crowns

" crowns a year, Madam, are an inſult when " mentioned to perſons like myſelf."

Theſe words were repeated the next day to Madam the Preſident. " Oh! the inſolent " wretch!" ſaid ſhe; " I am piqued; you " ſhall ſee him at my feet." I paſs ſlightly over the nocturnal reflections of the ſage Ariſtus. A good coach, a commodious apartment, very far from my lady's, and the beſt cook in Paris; ſuch was his plan of life. " Our philoſophers," ſaid he, " perhaps will murmur a little. Be- " ſides, an ugly woman has in it ſomething " philoſophical; at leaſt, they will not ſuſ- " pect that I have purſued the pleaſures of ſen- " ſuality."

The day of his triumph arrives, and the ſuit of roſe-colour along with it: he views it, and bluſhes through vanity, rather than ſhame. Cleon however came to ſee him, with the diſ- turbed air of one poſſeſſed; and after having caſt an eye of indignation on the preparations for his dreſſing, " Sir," ſaid he to him, " if " I had to do with a man of the world, I " ſhould propoſe to him, by way of preface, " to exchange a thruſt with me. But I am " ſpaking to a philoſopher, and I come to " aſſault him with no other arms than frank- " neſs and virtue." " What is the matter " then?" demanded the ſage, ſomewhat con- founded at this preamble. " I loved Clariſſa, " Sir," replied Cleon; " ſhe loved me, we

" were

" were going to be married. I know not " what change is made all of a ſudden in her " ſoul, but ſhe will not hear me ſpeak any " more either of marriage or of love. I had " at firſt only ſome ſuſpicions concerning the " cauſe of this change; but this roſe-coloured " ſuit confirms them. Roſe-colour is her " paſſion; you adopt her colours: you are " my rival."—" I, Sir!"—" I cannot doubt " it, and all the circumſtances that atteſt it " crowd themſelves on my imagination: your " ſecret walks, your whiſpers in the ear, " looks and words that have eſcaped you, her " hatred particularly againſt Madam de Pon- " val, every thing betrays you, every thing " ſerves to open my eyes. Hear then, Sir, " what I have to propoſe. One of us muſt " give place. Violence is an unjuſt method; " generoſity will ſet us on good terms. I " love, I idoliſe Clariſſa; I had been happy " but for you; I may ſtill be ſo: my aſſi- " duities, time, and your abſence, may bring " her back to me. If, on the contrary, I " muſt renounce her, you ſee one who will " be driven to deſpair, and death will be my " reſource. Judge, Ariſtus, whether your " ſituation be the ſame. Conſult yourſelf, " and anſwer me. If the happineſs of your " life depends on giving up your conqueſt to " me, I require nothing, and I retire. " Go, " Sir," replied the philoſopher to him with

a ſerene air; "you ſhall never overcome "Ariſtus in a point of generoſity; and what-"ever it may coſt me, I will prove to you "that I merited this mark of eſteem."

"At laſt" ſaid he, when Cleon had left the room, "here is an opportunity of ſhowing an "heroical virtue. Ha, ha, you gentlemen "of the world you will learn to admire us... "They will not know it perhaps... Oh yes: "Clariſſa will communicate it in confidence "to her friends; theſe will tell it again to "others; the adventure is uncommon enough "to make a noiſe; after all, the worſt that "can happen will be to publiſh it myſelf. "It is neceſſary that a good deed ſhould be "known, and it matters not which way: our "age has need of theſe examples: they are "leſſons for mankind.... However, let me "not become a dupe to my own virtues, and "diſpoſſeſs myſelf of Clariſſa before I am ſure "of Madam Preſident. Let me ſee what "champagne and ſleep may have produced."

While he reflected thus on his conduct, the philoſopher dreſſed himſelf. The induſtrious Jaſmin ſurpaſſed himſelf in dreſſing his head: the roſe-coloured ſuit was put on before the looking glaſs with a ſecret complacency, and the ſage ſallied out all radiant to viſit Madam Preſident, who received him with an exclamation of ſurpriſe. But paſſing all of a ſudden from joy to confuſion, "I perceive," ſaid ſhe,

"Clariſſa's

"Clariſſa's favourite colour: you are atten-
"tive to ſtudy her taſte. Go, Ariſtus, go
"and avail yourſelf of the trouble you take
"to pleaſe her: it will, no doubt, have its
"reward." "My natural ingenuouſneſs,"
replied the philoſopher, "permits me not to
"conceal from you, that in the choice of this
"colour I have followed only her caprice. I
"will do more, Madam; I will confeſs that
"my firſt deſire was to pleaſe in her eyes.
"The wiſeſt is not without weakneſs; and
"when a woman prejudiſes us by flattering
"attentions, it is difficult not to be touched
"with them: but how my attachment is
"weakened! I acknowledge it with reproach
"to myſelf, Madam, and you ought alſo to
"reproach yourſelf for it."—"Ah! philo-
"ſopher why is not this true! But this roſe-
"colour confounds all my ideas."—"Very
"well, Madam, I aſſumed it with regret; I
"now go to quit it with joy; and if my firſt
"ſimplicity...."—"No, ſtay, I think you
"charming. But what do I ſay? Ah, how
"happy are people in being ſo handſome!
"Ariſtus, why am I not beautiful!"—
"What! Madam, do not you know that ug-
"lineſs and beauty exiſt only in opinion?
"Nothing is handſome, nothing ugly in it-
"ſelf. A beauty in one country is far from
"being reckoned beauty in another; ſo many
"men, ſo many minds." "You flatter me,

ſaid Madam Preſident with a childiſh baſhfullneſs, and pretending to bluſh: "but I "know, alas! but too well, that I have no- "thing beautiful in me, except my ſoul."— "Very well, and is not the ſupreme beauty "the only charm worthy to touch the heart?" —"Ah, philoſopher, believe me, that beauty "alone has few charms."—"It has few, no "doubt, for the vulgar; but, to repeat it "once more, you are not reduced to that. "Is there nothing in a noble air, a command- "ing look, and an expreſſive countenance? "And then as to Majeſty, is ſhe not the queen "of the Graces?"—"And for this plumpneſs "of mine, what ſay you to that?"—"Ah, "Madam, this plumpneſs, which is rec- "koned an exceſs among us, is a beauty in "Aſia. Do you think, for example, that "the Turks have no ſkill in women? Well "then, all thoſe elegant figures which we "admire at Paris would not even be admit- "ted into the Grand Seignour's ſeraglio; and "the Grand Seignour is no fool. In a word, "a roſy ſtate of health is the mother of the "pleaſures, and plumpneſs is its ſymbol."— "You will bring me preſently to believe that "my fat is not unbecoming. But for this "noſe of mine, noſe without end, which "runs out before my face."—"Why, good "God, what is that you complain of? Were "not the noſes of the Roman matrons noſes

"without

" without end? Obſerve all the ancient buſts."
—" But at leaſt they had not this great mouth,
" and ſuch blubber lips."—" Thick lips,
" Madam, are the charm of the American
" beauties: they are, as it were, two cu-
" ſhions, on which ſoft and tender pleaſure
" takes its repoſe. As to a wide mouth, I
" know nothing that gives the countenance
" more openneſs and gaiety."—" True,
" when the teeth are fine; but unhappily. . ."
—" Go to Siam, there fine teeth are vulgar,
" and it is a ſcandal even to have any. Thus
" all that is called beauty depends on the ca-
" price of mankind, and the only real beauty
" is the object which has charmed us. Shall
" I be yours then, my dear philoſopher?"
demanded ſhe, hiding her face behind her fan.
—" Pardon me, Madam, if I heſitate. My
" delicacy renders me timid, and I profeſs a
" diſintereſtedneſs not yet ſufficiently known
" to you, to be above ſuſpicion. You have
" talked to me of ten thouſand crowns a-year,
" and that circumſtance makes me tremble."
—" Go, Sir, you are too juſt to impute to
" me ſuch mean ſuſpicions; it is Clariſſa that
" detains you; I ſee your evaſions; leave me."
" Yes, I leave you, to go and acquit my-
" ſelf of the promiſe I have juſt made to
" Cleon. He was diſmiſſed, he complained
" to me of it, and I have promiſed him to en-
" gage Clariſſa to give him her hand. Now
" believe

"believe that I love her."—"Is it poſſible?
"Oh, you charm me, and I cannot ſtand
"this ſacrifice. Go and ſee her, I wait you
"here, do not let me languiſh: this very
"evening we will leave the country."

"I wonder at myſelf," ſaid he as he was going off, "for having the courage to marry "her. She is frightfull; but ſhe is rich." He comes to Clariſſa, finds her at her toilette, and Cleon along with her, who aſſumes, on ſeeing him, a dejected air.—"O! the hand-"ſome ſuit!" cried ſhe, "Come this way, "that I may ſee you. It is quite delicious, "is it not, Cleon? It was my choice." I "ſee it plainly, Madam," replied Cleon with "a melancholy air. Let us leave off this "trifling," interrupted the philoſopher; "I "am come to clear myſelf of a crime of which "I am accuſed, and to fulfil a ſerious duty. "Cleon loves you, you love him: he has "loſt your heart, he tells me, and that I am "the cauſe of it."—"Yes, Sir: and why "all this myſtery? I have juſt been making "a declaration of it to him."—"And I, Ma-"dam, declare to you, that I will never make "unhappy a worthy man, who merits you, "and dies if he loſes you. I love you as "much as he can love you: it is a confeſſion "which I am not aſhamed to make; but his "inclination has been more rooted by the "unconquerable force of habit than mine, and

"perhaps

" perhaps alſo I ſhall find in myſelf reſources " which he has not in himſelf." " O, the " wonderfull man!" cryed Cleon, embracing the philoſopher. " What ſhall I ſay to you! " You confound me." " There is no mighty " matter in all this," replyed the philoſopher with humility: " your generoſity ſet the ex- " ample, I only imitate you." " Come, " ladies," ſaid Clariſſa to Lucinda and Doris, whom ſhe ſaw appear at that inſtant, " Come " and be witneſſes of the triumph of philoſo- " phy. Ariſtus riſigns me to his rival, and ſa- " crifices his love for me to the happineſs of a " man he hardly knows." Their aſtoniſhment and admiration were acted up to the life; and Ariſtus, taking Clariſſa's hand, which he put into Cleon's, ſnuffed up in abundance, with a ſupercilious modeſty, the incenſe of adoration. " Be happy," ſaid he to them, and ceaſe your " aſtoniſhment at an effort, which, however " painfull, carries it's recompenſe along with " it. What then would a philoſopher be, if " virtue were not every thing to him?" At theſe words he retired, as it were, to withdraw himſelf from his glory.

Madam Preſident waited the philoſopher's coming. " Is it done then?" demanded ſhe of him. " Yes, Madam, they are united; I " am now my own, and yours."—" O, I tri- " umph: you are mine. Come here then, " that I may enchain you."—" Ah! Madam," ſaid

ſaid he, falling at her knees, "what dominion you have acquired over me! O Socrates! O Plato! what is become of your diſciple? Do you yet know him in this ſtate of abaſement!" While he ſpoke thus, Madam Preſident took a roſe-coloured riband, which ſhe bound about the ſage's neck, and imitating Lucinda in the *Oracle* *, with the moſt comical infantine air in the world called him by the name of *Charmer*. "Good heaven! what would become of me if any body knew . . . . Ah, Madam," ſaid he, "let us fly, let us baniſh ourſelves from a ſociety that watches us; ſpare me the humiliation."—"What is it you call humiliation? I muſt have you glory in their preſence that you are mine, that you wear my chain." At theſe words the door opens, and Madam Preſident gets up, holding the philoſopher in a ſtring. "See here," ſaid ſhe to the company, "ſee here this proud man, who ſighs at my feet for the beauty of my purſe: I deliver him up to you, I have played my part." At this picture the roof reſounded with the name of *Charmer*, and innumerable peals of laughter. Ariſtus, tearing his hair, and rending his clothes with rage, launched out into reproaches on the perfidy of women, and went off to compoſe a book againſt the age, in which he roundly aſſerted, that there was no ſage but himſelf.

2 AP 57 A Farce.

End *of the* FIRST VOLUME.